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M E M O I R S
O F
A SOCIAL MONSTER;
O R,

THE HISTORY OF
CHARLES PRICE, K

Otherwise BOLINGBROKE, otherwise JOHNSON,
otherwise PARKS, otherwise WIGMORE, other-
wise BRANK, otherwise WILMOTT, otherwise
WILLIAMS, otherwise SCHUTZ, otherwise
TREVORS, otherwise POLTON, otherwise TAY-
LOR, otherwise POWEL, &c. &c. &c. and com-
monly called

O L D P A T C H.

Containing an accurate Account of the astonishing FRAUD
and ingenious FORGERIES of that truly

G R E A T M A N,

On the GOVERNOR and COMPANY of the BANK of
ENGLAND for a Series of Six Years.

I N C L U D I N G

A faithful Detail of his DEVICES and DEPREDACTIONS
on SOCIETY for a Period of Fifty-five Years.

*Even-handed Justice returns the Ingredients
Of our poison'd Chalice to our own Lips!*

SHAKESPEARE.

L O N D O N.

Printed for G. Kearlsey, at Johnson's Head, in Fleet Street.

M.DCC.LXXXVI.

6



DEDICATION.

AS nothing can be more flattering than the liberal encouragement already afforded to our labours, so it is a most agreeable duty, not only to acquire, but to preserve the favour and protection of the public.

Impelled by these pleasing incentives, we cheerfully engaged in collecting the life of the most extraordinary character, on which the Divine Creator ever bestowed the human form.

The rapid sale of six editions of the pamphlet was the most convincing proof, that the whole life of our hero would be by no means unacceptable ; and, we

hope, we have collected it with an accuracy which demonstrates, that

The labour we delight in physies pain.

The chief intention of this *new work* is, to promote the cause of virtue, religion, and morality—to impress upon the mind of every man a due sense of his own dignity, and to convince him, that the prostitution of human abilities is the most profligate ingratitude to the Holy Author of his being.

It would be a signal instance of disrespect, to withhold an acknowledgment of our obligations to the gentlemen who readily, and generously, supplied us with the materials for the compilation of these *Memoirs*.—To them, therefore, in particular, we return our most sincere and humble thanks.

To the public in general also, (whose curiosity we shall ever esteem it our duty

to gratify, whenever enormous offences are committed) we humbly dedicate these
MEMOIRS of a SOCIAL MONSTER.

If they, effectually, warn one thoughtless youth from the destructive ways of wickedness — if they retrieve from the errors of past proceedings but one unthinking man, who has deviated from the line of moral rectitude — if they guard one able and indigent creature, only, against falling into the snares and temptations with which his most mortal enemy is hourly alluring him; — and if they operate, in general, with all good men, as encouragements to perseverance in public and private virtues, our pains will be truly profitable. — These MEMOIRS may then be considered as arrows that hit, but do not hurt; and, that though they penetrate the heart, yet they are pointed with—
GOLD.

—— *Tali quis nollet ab icū.*
Ridendo tremulas mortis non ire sub umbras?

INVO-

I N V O C A T I O N

T O

L U C I F E R.

COME, prince of darkness ! demon of infernal mischief, come ! Whether at Rufus' Hall, with band and gown, in glorious quirk engaged ; or, in the pulpit, snuffing to the long-ear'd tribe of Tottenham Court Road, lost in rhapsodic madness, thee we call from thence ! Attend ! Deeds, that must delight thee more, demand thee ! Thou who didst inspire thy chosen servant, Voltaire, to ridicule religion, morality, and his God !—Come in that satyric garb in which thou didst hug the wicked wit, whilst he described the professor Pangloss, the best of all possible German theologians, giving his beloved Cunegunda a lecture in experimental philosophy ! Or, should a nocturnal visit please thee most, then come at that hour, and take that comic shape and limping gait in which thou didst appear to the young student, whilst he surveyed thy power, influence, and excellence at Madrid.—But should neither of these allure thee, then
assume

assume that subtle air with which thou didst infuse thy glowing satire into the mind of our modern Aristophanes ! O Lucifer ! O Belzebub ! O Asmodeus ! O Cupid ! whichsoever name thou chusest, for great and glorious is thy fame in each, come with all thy grinning malice, thy arch delights, thy chearful malignity, and teach us to relate with life and glee the never-to-be-forgotten exploits of thy twin-brother CHARLES PRICE ! It is thy cause, O prince, that we embrace, it is thy honour that we seek, it is thy glory we would establish ; suffer us not, therefore, to flag in this thy honourable service. Peradventure, by reading the immortal deeds of thy near and dear relation, a child of Heaven may gain a whole kingdom, and lose his own soul. What then will be thy joy ? how great thy triumph ! How will thy subterranean imps rejoice, when the fallen angel graces thy domain, by reading only what thy ingenuity hast inspired us to write ! Thee, therefore, we invoke ! and, whilst we write, instruct. Make easy to our researches that wonderful system of thy government, practised with so much dexterity from the Courtier at St. James's to the Lawyer at Lincoln's-Inn, of cutting a man's throat with a feather.—Give us to know, and knowing, to understand, how, when these thy agents smile,

we

we may expect our ruin—and also that we may distinguish their pretended assiduities to serve, from their real intentions to destroy. Lastly, thou old and fruitful genius of most pleasant mischief, convince us, for we have some shrewd doubts about us, whether or no it was not thy own infernal majesty, instead of master Patch, that so long and so ingeniously contrived to plague mankind with thy exploits ? Thou, who knowest the simulation of characters ; thou, who understandest so well the proximities of head and heart, inform us, if any but the devil himself could possess sentiments so truly appropriate to thy sable majesty.—Could a mortal make a boast, that he never had a friendship for any man in his life, nor ever wished any man to have a friendship for him—could he avow that TRICK upon TRICK was the universal principle, and that he would practice it as often as he found it expedient ! Explain this one secret to us, good king of hell, and we are thine to the very centre of thy dominions ; where, having finished this history in a manner that redounds to thy praise and glory, we may exult

—*Per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum
Tendimus !*

To

TO the READER.

HAVING, since the conclusion of these MEMOIRS, been favoured by a friend with the perusal of a book, intituled *The SWINDLERS CHRONICLE*, published in the year 1778, in which our hero was then introduced, an extract that relates to him is here prefixed, as it not only confirms our likeness of his person, but serves to authenticate that part of the history to which it so pointedly alludes. Vide page 152.

CHARLES PRICE, besides being guilty of a great number of other villainies, lately defrauded a widow in the following manner: pretending that he had disposed of a very great sum of ready money in the purchase of a valuable estate, the rents of which he was not willing to demand till an appointed time, he prevailed upon the poor woman to lend him five hundred pounds, and to take eight per cent interest.

With this money he set up a brewery on the Surry side of the Thames, not far from the residence of a great Bishop, where he remained as long as he could make a prey of the neighbouring inhabitants.

Upon

Upon application being made to him for the above five hundred pounds, he entered an action against the deluded widow for usury, and recovered treble the sum borrowed.

What aggravates the guilt of this ADVENTURER is, his knowing the success of his scheme would inevitably ruin the poor woman and her family; and indeed this was the case, for she is now in the most distressed circumstances imaginable.

He is one of the persons who advertise to extricate tradesmen from their difficulties. Whenever he is applied to on this business, he prevails upon the unfortunate persons to lay before him the whole state of their affairs, and after pretending to have been some days extremely busy among the creditors, either extorts money from them by threatening to expose their circumstances, or actually arrests them for pretended services.

He is a middle-sized man, rather of a fair complexion, hollow-eyed, with a sharp nose and chin, inclining towards each other.

T A B L E

O F

C O N T E N T S.

	Page
O UR Hero's parentage and their profession — —	1
The original Name altered by his father	2
Anecdote of George S——n	ibid
Runs away from his master in Wales	3
Apprenticed by the parish	5
When he first came to London	ibid
First worked in Monmouth-street in the year 1737	6
A peculiar expression of our Hero's	ibid
Anecdote of the master of our Hero's mother	ibid
Sets up as a salesman near Monmouth-street, the corner of Earl-street	9
The birth of Thomas Price, the eldest son	11
The epoch of our Hero's birth	ibid
When first sent to school	ibid
Sent to learn French of a Swiss	12
Anecdote of the first little advantage he took of his father—and sells a piece of lace to a Jew	ibid
His eldest brother Tom severely flogged for it	15
b	Becomes

Becomes a great favourite with his father	17
Thomas Price first sent from home to Mr. Creed of Rosemary-lane	19
How he took a very ingenious advantage of him	20
Story of our Hero and a sailor	21
Pilfers three guineas from his father out of one suit of cloaths .	24
Description of a <i>Fine Flat</i>	25
Our Hero's exposition of the ninth Command- ment	26
His curious explanation of F. R. S.	27
The unfortunate discovery of the first little ad- vantage he took of his father	28
Anecdote of the first forgery our Hero com- mitted	29
Our Hero put apprentice, and where, in hopes to reclaim him	30
Robs his father of a suit of cloaths	31
Defrauds his master in them, in the name of Benjamin Bolingbroke, Esq.	ibid
Detected and runs away	32
Gets to be clerk to a merchant in the City	ibid
Defrauds him	33
No comparison between our Hero and Jona- than Wild	34
Mr. Price dies of a broken heart, 13th Nov. 1750, and cuts both his sons off with a shilling	36
The	

The first corpse carried over Westminster-bridge	37
Our Hero decamps to Holland in the name of Johnson	38
Forges a recommendation from his last master to a Dutch diamond merchant—be- comes his clerk—debauches his master's daughter—is offered him in marriage— robs his master and returns to Eng- land	50
Swindles the captain of his passage	51
Becomes clerk in his Majesty's small-beer brew-house at Weovil, in Hampshire	52
Is offered his master's daughter in marriage	54
—Is visited by his brother—denies him to his master—who follows him to Portf- mouth—our Hero's character there fully opened by the Jew to whom he sold the lace—and is discharged	69
Our Hero goes to Portsmouth	70
Quarrels with the Jew and leaves it	72
His advertisement for a partner in a brewery	75
Gets an assignment of some premises	76
It is answered by Samuel Foote, Esq.	77
The whole of the connexion between that gen- tleman and our Hero, till he robbed him of 500l.	83
Severe retort of Mr. Foote	84
Robs the landlord	ibid
	Skulks

Skulks about from one coffee-house to another	38
Our hero turns Methodist	87
Defrauds a lady at Chelsea of 3000 l.	89
Mrs. Poulteney first introduced into this history	ibid
Her description	91
Our Hero advertises as a match-maker	92
His residence in Red-Lion-street, Clerkenwell Green	95
Swindles a Mr. Wigmore of 55 guineas in the disguise of a clergyman—is indicted—re- funds a part and escapes	97 to 105
Swindles a baker also	108
Becomes clerk to Mr. Stables, a brewer, in Wild street, Lincoln's Inn Fields	113
Gets acquainted with Mr. W—, then a cooper, and robs that gentleman of 2000 l.—His fraudulent practice in Green-street, Gros- venor-square	121
Our Hero puts up again in 1762, in Gray's Inn- lane as a brewer	122
Mr. Stowe shoots himself	123
Defrauds a Captain Wise of 2000 l.	127
Attacks Mr. W. a second time, but fails	ibid
Gets 200 l. by that plan	133
Our Hero becomes a bankrupt in 1776.—Cu- rious account of the meeting of the Com- missioners,	Continued to page 138
Decamps to Germany—is in prison at Ostend— defrauds	

defrauds two persons of 300l. in a smuggling scheme—is discharged by his artful defence	139 to 143
Is transported for life out of the Emperor's dominions	146
Returns to England—sets up a sham brewery in Lambeth — marries Mrs. Price—who she is—is detected in a distillery—exchequered—flies to Copenhagen—and returns to England	151 to 160
Obtains money from Mr. W— by imposition as charity	161
Is sent to the Marshalsea prison	165
Over-reaches Mr. Hancock of Lambeth by disguising himself as a clergyman	167
Is taken in Holborn and sent to Newgate in the name of Charles Price, alias William Parks—is removed to the King's Bench, and the artful manner in which he obtained his Majesty's discharge	172 to 183
Sets up a Lottery Office keeper	185
His character exposed in a book called the Swindler's Chronicle	192
Defrauds all his insurers, and decamps with a 2000l. ticket	193
Sets up another office the next year in Butcher-Row, in the name of Parks	194
His	His

His first attack on the Bank as Old Patch in the year 1780	195
Advertisement from the Bank	201
The narrative of his engaging his first servant Samuel at Mr. Preston's music-shop in the Strand, in the name of Brank, and the negociation of 1400l. forged notes to Samuel,—detection and commitment to Tothilfields Bridewell	206 to 225
Samuel receives a message to meet his master, and Mr. Bond's plan to apprehend him fails	228
Traced again to Mr. Pryfaut's, No. 17, Gresse-street, in 1782, in the name of Wilmott	234
Gets his second servant from Johnson's Regis- ter-Office, the son of Mr. Power, a taylor	235
Account of his defrauding Mr. Spillbury of Soho-square	242
An engraving of his counterfeit writing to Mr. S—, and of his real hand	245
Fraud on Mr. S— concluded	248
Circumstances relating to his defrauding Mr. Nott, hosier of Newgate-street,	249 to 255
Account of his fraud on Mr. Reeves colour- man, Holborn-bridge	256
Letter to ditto	ibid
Ditto	257
	Sixty

	Sixty 10 l. notes negotiated in one day	258
	Ditto on Mr. Babbs, bookseller, Oxford-street	259
	Letter to ditto	261
	His artful and hypocritical story to Mr. Babbs's shopman	ibid
	Our hero's observations on Mr. Ryland's exe- cution	266
	His advertisement for a partner in a banking- house	267
	Bon mot of our hero to his servant's father	269
	His surprizing deception and fraud on Mr. Roberts as Mr. Bond	271
	Ditto on Mr. Roberts's brother	276
	Changes fourteen 50 l. notes for 7 of 100 l.	ibid
	Fraud at the Bank the day peace was pro- claimed	281
	His attempt to defraud Mr. Levy, a Portu- guese Jew, of 5000 l. worth of diamonds	282
	Lodges at Mr. Conoly's, Swallow-street, Ox- ford-street, in the name of Schutz—His description	283
	Mr. Pearson's, the King's messenger's, infor- mation, and Mr. Aſton's, the Solicitor the Bank, purſuit of him to France	285 to 291
	Defrauds Mr. —, laceman, and Mr. Do- naldſon, bookseller, of St. Paul's Church- Yard	292
		Defrauds

Defrauds Mr. E. merchant in the City of 500l. in the name of Trevors	296
Our Hero removes Mrs. Price from Padding- ton to George's Row, Hydepark Corner, and Mrs. Hickeringill to Tottenham Court Road, in the name of Ann Polton	297
His fresh plan to put off his forged notes, and advertisement	298
The Bank advertises Ann Polton	300
The narrow escape of our Hero	303
His last plan to defraud the Bank	305
Lives in a Meuse in Tottenham-street, in the name of Taylor, with Mrs. Hickeringill	307
Apprehended at Mr. Aldus's, pawnbroker in Berwick-street, by a plan of Mr. Clarke's	308
Is brought to Bow-street, and his behaviour there	312
His commitment to Tothil Fields Bridewell	313
Mrs. Price's lodging when our Hero was ap- prehended	315
His plan to convey a letter to Mrs. Hicker- ingill	316
Her device to destroy all his disguises, imple- ments, &c.	318
Plan of Mr. Clarke's to discover the remains of them	321
Our	

	Our Hero wraps a 10l. Bank-note round the stopper of a decanter	322
296	Wishes the OLD HYPOCRITE to be taken, to Mr. C. Jealous, when going to Bow- street for re-examination	ibid.
	Sworn to by the waiter he sent for	323
297	The mother of the boy whom our Hero em- ployed proves his identity	
298	Mr. Clarke's ingenious stratagem to secure Mrs. Hickeringill	325
300	She is apprehended, and brought to Bow-street	ibid.
303	Our Hero found hanging	327
305	His letter to Mr. and Mrs. Fenwick	329
307	His meditations from scripture	330
	His letter to M——w W——n's, Esq.	333
308	His reason why it was no sin to rob the Bank of England	335
312	His declaration that mankind consisted of ty- gers, wolves and foxes, but no lambs	337
313	Mrs. Hickeringill's sentiment of the Bank	338
15	Anecdote of Mr. Fenwick's servant	ibid.
16	Reason why his altering the teller's ticket is a forgery	340
18	Our Hero is buried and where	341
	Conclusion.	

POSTSCRIPT.

POSTSCRIPT.

Mr. Wood, the name of the maltster he ruined at Wandsworth.

Mr. Levy, the name of the gentleman he intended to defraud of diamonds.

T H E

H I S T O R Y, &c.

WE have exerted all our biographical dexterity, but in vain, to trace the descent of the hero who is to be the subject of these memoirs. It would have been a great pleasure to us, had we been enabled to inform our readers, that he had descended from some of those stocks of our ancient nobility, who are indebted for their dignities either to the treasons of their grandfathers, or the prostitution of their grandmothers.—All we can learn is, that he came of poor but honest Welch parentage, who prided themselves in their loyalty to their prince, and eat their leeks with content. That his grandfather and father were taylor's by trade, and that his mother set some value upon her virtue. It is therefore pretty evident, that he could not come from the loins of any very noble race. One suggestion, however, we are certainly at

A

liberty

liberty to make, and we hope the reader will pardon us for anticipating his reflection, that, as his father, when in his native mountains, was called Ap-rice, so it denoted him of some Welch distinction; but when he quitted Wales, which was in the year 1720, he laid down the title of *Ap*, and by a modest contraction, peculiar to those sons of innocence and liberty, when they are on their travels, and also in conformity to the principles of his profession, he anglicised it into *Price*. From this suggestion arises two reflections, first, that the fire of our hero could not be of a very dingy descent, and secondly, which we are informed is an absolute fact, and therefore, as historians, hold ourselves bound to record it, it served him for a very special purpose; not that of deferring his creditors, like a celebrated wit who paid his debts alphabetically,*

* It may not be amiss to explain this story. The person alluded to was waited on by his taylor, who being asked his name, said it was LLOYD. Are you sure, said the gentleman, it is not Floyd?—O yes, Sir, said honest stitch, I assure you it is Lloyd.—Because, replied the wit, I understand that in Wales, Lloyd and Floyd are synonymous terms, that you sometimes call Floyd Lloyd, and Lloyd Floyd.—Sometimes, Sir, said the taylor; but my name is Lloyd.—Why, then, Mr. Lloyd, said the gentleman, you must know that I am paying my debts alphabetically, and had your name been Floyd, you might have stood some chance with your F, but I would not give a d——n for your L.

but

but he sunk the *A*, in order to avoid the enquiries of a certain gentleman, from whom in the 20th year of his age, and the 5th year of his apprenticeship, he thought proper to run away.— There is no doubt but this elopement was the effect of his ambition, and as all deeds of dishonour or dishonesty, when buttoned up in that royal furtout, are intitled to our praise and admiration; so we could not much blame Mr. Price for aspiring to wealth and renown, had he even acquired it by cutting his master's throat, and afterwards running away with the whole of his property.

It was in the year aforesaid, that the father of our hero, thinking himself fully qualified in the true art and mystery of the goose and thimble, for he had certainly already turned a black coat for the curate of the parish, thought there was no great necessity for throwing away two years more of his time upon his master, notwithstanding any indenture to the contrary, and emerged from his obscurity in Wales; thereby laying the foundation of that fortune and honour, which afterwards crowned him in Monmouth Street, in the parish of St. Giles's in the Fields, in the county of Middlesex.

We could certainly conceal a circumstance from the reader, if we did not conceive the integrity of an historian to be of more importance than an oath, taken by many people at the Old Bailey, who think themselves only bound to *true answer make to all such questions as shall be demanded*, and therefore conscientiously tell only that part of the case which they are not paid to disclose, be it either to acquit or hang the prisoner: and should a cross accident bring out any circumstance unfavourable to their views, can immediately, upon an interrogatory, advert to the oath and clear their consciences by replying, "*I was not asked the question.*" But we, who are sworn by another and better kind of oath, and in which there is no such good natured salvo, viz. that of *telling the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth*, must not omit any part of the history that has come to our knowledge: Besides, there is a delicacy in historians which can rarely be found in Old Bailey witnesses, for we think the concealment of a truth, in certain cases, equally criminal with telling a wilful falsehood; and therefore, in the discharge of our consciences, must inform our readers that the said Charles, who afterwards became so great a
man

man in St. Giles's, had been put out apprentice to the said master, by the said parish, who had given with him no less a sum than fifty shillings. Nor can we offend any gentleman of the goose and thimble by recording such base-born servitude, who now may stile himself an *Esquire*, or write himself one of his majesty's justices of the peace for the county of Middlesex, and city and liberty of Westminster, even though it might have been his own case: for have not many of our bishops, nay, arch-bishops, been servitors of Oxford or sizers of Cambridge, and sent there by a charity school? And where then can be the reflection, when we say the father of our hero had been a parish apprentice?

Having therefore said as much of him, up to this period, as we do know, we hold it right we should not say of him what we do not know; and, according to the line already laid down by us, think it proper to declare that from the year 1720, we have no further knowledge of our hero's fire, than, that he industriously worked as an humble journeyman taylor in the cities of London and Westminster, with divers masters in the said profession till the year 1727, which, by

calculation, we shall find, was serving his apprenticeship in this great metropolis, as a journeyman, for his own emolument, ere he arrived at that seat of promotion, a shop-board in Monmouth Street.

We cannot help observing here, even though by way of anticipation, the strength of a reflection once made by our hero. "*Had I never been at Copenhagen I should never have got out of Newgate;*" which reflection we shall in due time explain. To this we may, perhaps, add, that the son might never have hanged himself had the father never have got into Monmouth Street; for there is no doubt, but it was from thence he drew all his ideas of deception, in the different disguises in which we shall exhibit him hereafter, and prove him the most renowned character of the age. Thus we see how ambition raises itself,—the old man left Wales, a poor journeyman Welch taylor, and got promoted to be one of the commissioners of the board in Monmouth Street, and the young one, thereby, has the honour of becoming the hero of this our history.

The reader will see that seven years have elapsed with nothing very remarkable; but as
all

all great accomplishments generally owe their origin to very little circumstances, we could not, without violating the gradations of history, omit to mention the circumstance that laid the foundation of the most curious scenes of dissimulation, that ever dignified the fertile invention of ingenious knavery.

It was in this situation that the father of our hero, who had saved about one hundred pounds, thought proper to take unto himself a wife, of whom it is hardly worth our while to say much, because it appeareth unto us that she was eminent for nothing but good qualities, and a woman no way worthy of the precious male-fruit of her loins.—She had been a servant to a carpenter in that neighbourhood, who, by his industry, was enabled to become a builder, he then sat up for a gentleman, and took a country house in the county of Surry, by virtue of his majesty's writ of Habeas Corpus. After satisfying his creditors, by paying them—nothing at all, he repaired his shattered fortune by becoming an eminent trading justice of the peace, and thereby, without assuming any impudence or arrogance, as he was legally entitled,

entitled, subscribed himself J——n M——n,
Esquire. It is hardly worth our while to mention so trivial a circumstance, which happened so many years ago, as there are now a days, many equally honourable gentlemen with the same equally honourable title, who enjoy the dignity to which they were raised without the specious qualification of merit, learning, or abilities. The Custos Rotolorum knows that signing even the name is more than sufficient, or he never would have put one of the aforesaid honourable gentlemen into the commission, who never will do his country so much service as our hero did, when his nice feelings drove him to execute himself even on the bare suspicion of a forgery. Nor, indeed, should we have noticed it at all, but for the circumstance of its having enabled our hero's father to set up master for himself; for his wife having been that indiscreet sort of girl, who delighted more in laying up her money, than in spending it on those kind of sweethearts who apply themselves rather to the pantry and the purse, than to the heart of their dulcinea's; so, finding Mr. Price a sober, active, busy, bustling young fellow, she thought, and wisely too, in our opinion, that she could not bestow

bestow the fruits of her industry, near two hundred pounds, better than by taking to husband such a knight of the thimble, as would in all probability bring in an increase to their stock as well as their family.

To return. By a peculiar assiduity in his business, and the joint stock just mentioned, Mr. Price became enabled to set up as a salesman, and became master for himself in the very place where he had been a journeyman. As his tongue never wanted for oil, nor his fingers for birdlime, so his eye, like that of a hawk's, never let a pigeon escape him.—We may add likewise, that if a brother hawk attempted to seize the same prey, the talons of Mr. Price so skillfully struck him in the assailable part, that he was sure to fly away with the game.—These valuable accomplishments, whilst they acquired him the respect of his brother salesmen without doors, and probably their curses within, added every day to his gains, thereby verifying the old proverb, "*The more the fox is cursed the better he thrives.*" —This adage was often in the mouth of Mr. Price, who frequently boasted his cunning in having taken a Shop the corner of Earl Street and

and West Street, which commanded four principal streets, leading into Monmouth Street. If the reader ever has been in London, he must know that those tradesmen, who mean to thrive in the world, and live comfortably on the fruits of their honest labours, such as pawn-brokers, keepers of gin-shops, and bawdy-house keepers, generally contrive, for the convenience of their customers, to take a corner shop, and thereby, like good gamesters, sweep every thing before them; very judiciously considering a corner house to be a snug freehold estate, though it may not have any yards, ways, easements, drains, passages, water-courses, &c. &c. which give a preference to every other estate in the kingdom.

To the observer of human nature it is often seen that the want of education is often supplied by a good stock of worldly cunning. Hence, tho' Mr. Price was very illiterate in the classics, yet he was a proficient in the science of making money.—Though he would over-reach any customer, and swear he was a loser, yet he despised any act of knavery out of his own line of trade.—Two words therefore may sum up his character,—he was a smart clever fellow.

In the year 1721, the first born son of Mr. Price came into the world, who was called Thomas, and the year 1723 must be ever renowned in the calendar for producing the greatest genius that ever came within the confines of Tothil Fields Bridewell; we may even add, that general rendezvous of great geniuses, his majesty's gaol of Newgate. The year following, this industrious couple were rewarded by the birth of a daughter, who inheriting her mother's virtues, lives to this day with reputation to herself, and a credit to a very honest man, her husband, in the same street, and in the same profession.

As soon as these two boys, the eldest son, Thomas, and Charles, our hero, were capable of learning to read and write, they were sent to a school, kept by a Mr. Beardmore, in Queen Street, Soho, where both of them soon gave those indications of learning, and proofs of those shining abilities, which induced the father some time before he died, to cut them off with a shilling, and leave the whole of his property to his only daughter. When they had improved in those parts of education which Mr. Beard-

more

more was qualified to teach, sufficiently to justify a removal, Mr. Price put them to a Mr. Knollett, a very worthy *Swiss* gentleman, who taught *French* in Queen Street, Seven Dials. It was at this academy our hero first acquired a smattering of that language, and we must do him the justice to own, he not only out-stripped his elder brother in school exercises, but in school rogueries, one instance of which we have been enabled to treat our readers with.—There happened to be a very great likeness between the two; but in ingenuity, which some silly people term thieving, and in presence of mind, which some weak judges of the human heart call impudence, our Charley was the elder brother.—Having very ingeniously, therefore, ripped from a coat a piece of gold lace, worth fifteen shillings, he put on his brother's coat, whipped out at the back door and sold it to a Jew merchant for fifteen pence, returning the same way, and then put his own coat on.—This lace was missed by Mr. Price in a few hours, and every body taxed with it, but he found it was done by *Nobody*, a good-natured gentleman, who very unjustly bears a considerable portion of blame, when the party robbed cannot discover on whose shoulders the robbery ought really to fall; and
for

for which this Mr. Nobody is very often threatened to be kicked and cuffed, nay even to be horse-whipped whenever he is discovered.—Unfortunately, however, for the elder, who had as boldly denied the fact, as the second born son had ingeniously contrived it, the Jew merchant, who was travelling with his diurnal warehouse from St. James's, happened to take Monmouth Street in his route to Duke's Place, in order to shew Mr. Price a good bargain, when, on emptying the warehouse aforesaid, commonly called a sack, among other equally honest purchases, to the great surprize and astonishment of Mr. Price, out tumbled the above piece of lace.—Question succeeded question, and threat, at last, forced that from the Israelite, which even Mr. Price's cunning could not have produced without it. He acknowledged that he had bought it of a boy in the street, but swore by the five books of Moses he thought him to have been a footman, that he came honestly by it, or he would not have bought it, and by Jehovah, that he gave him a fair market for it, half a guinea, which was only nine shillings and three-pence more than the said Jew had actually given. Now in this lie the Israelite know himself secure; for,

as he was one of those good-natured tribe of Jews, who never would let a friend be lost for want of an affidavit or two, so by having frequently obliged a friend in distress, he had acquired knowledge enough to know there could be no conviction for perjury, when it is only oath opposed against oath, and that in law, his oath would go as far as the very attorney's that employed him on such friendly occasions.

The description of this boy having been demanded, the Jew now as readily told a truth, as before he had invented a lie. Nor would we have the reader be at all surprised at this conduct in our merchant; for those who know best how to lie, know, that to blend a truth and a falsehood together, so that the lie cannot be separated from the truth, is the best and safest way of lying.—Now, as we cannot accuse the Jew of having stolen it, he would have been a little unjust to himself, if he had told what he really gave for it: he thought it necessary too, for his reputation, to add a lie to a truth, and to say he had given an honest price for what he had honestly bought. He therefore declared, upon his honour, that he bought it of a boy, gave half-a-guinea for it, and that he was
dressed

dressed in a blue coat.—The father with his
 lace, and the merchant with his warehouse,
 instantly tripped to Mr. Knollett's, where Tom-
 my and Charley were produced, when Moses
 immediately fixed on poor Master Tommy
 Price, who had his blue coat on; and Monsieur
 Knollett being informed of the fact, his poste-
 riors were immediately laid bare, on which cha-
 racters, of all colours, were presently pretty large-
 ly and deeply indented.—After this flogging
 bout, he was searched for the money, but in vain;
 and it was as equally vain to ask him what he
 had done with it, as to get him to acknowledge a
 fact he had never committed.—This denial pro-
 duced more castigation, and Mr. Price returned
 from the school, lamenting the severe correction,
 and the boy's obstinacy.—The reader must also
 know, that our hero was the very person that
 horsed his elder suffering brother. And as it
 was the first of his ingenious contrivances we
 have upon record, we cannot dismiss the tale,
 without informing him, that he has frequently
 boasted, it was the greatest delight he ever tasted
 during the whole catalogue of his scholastic di-
 versions.

We think it would be tedious to the reader, to recapitulate the exploits of our hero while at school. We are in possession of abundance, but as they all tend to prove him to have been an early borrower of other persons properties, without their special licence and consent first had and obtained, we hope the fact above stated, will be sufficient to describe a head and heart, which afterward turned out to be so great an honour to that society, of which he became so very eminent a member.—Besides, from the age of maturity to the time he departed this life, we know hardly of any one of his exploits, which the law could, vulgarly, term felony, save and except that for which he, with so much ill-nature to a certain great officer of justice, laid rude and violent hands upon himself. Whilst he was a man, he was too much of a gentleman, to blow out another's brains on the highway; or cleave his skull open with a hanger. He had too much pride to venture his neck for a purse, or his liberty for a pocket handkerchief. His attack was nobly confined to the heart and purse, jointly: and, if he could break the one, and secure the other, without doing you any bodily injury, that is, by the simple means of cunning
and

and contrivance, his end was perfectly answered; provided, that in accomplishing it, he could, at the same time, avoid the clutches of a certain long-armed lady, whom we have often seen with a bandage over her eyes, a pair of scales in one hand, and a sword in the other, who is now and then so rude, as to deal out an effectual blow or two, to those gentlemen who foolishly fall in love with what they ought have no inclination at all for, i. e. the property of other persons.

It was from this period, that our hero became the favourite of his father, and he the more ingratiated himself into it, the more he reviled his brother about the lace, which being sagacious enough to see, he artfully took every opportunity of reviving the offence before his father, and of jeering his brother on account of the punishment he had so unjustly received at the hands of Mr. Knollett. This laid the foundation of an animosity between the two brothers, which ripened with their years, and in proportion as Charles became the favourite, the hatred of Tom was thereby increased. He was of a quick, revengeful turn of mind, and as he could not brook the behaviour of Charles, his insolence was returned by blows; for which he

was repaid with that quantum of damages by the father, which the law directs on a recovery upon all *qui-tam* actions.—And here, one word of advice to all who call themselves *fond* parents, who have a favourite child.—The punishment of Tom, for an offence he never committed, and the suffering Charles to upbraid him with it, whilst it drove the one to be dishonest, encouraged the other to be a knave ; and though in different ways, yet in measures which corresponded with their different tempers. Tom, who was open in his disposition, soon became a bolder rogue ; and Charles, who was a sly artful fellow, daily improved in every species of dishonesty and deception.

As they grew up, the father found the necessity of separating them ; Tom was put out to a salesman, and Charles, for a time, remained at home. When we say for a time, we mean as long as the father could suffer him in his house, which was, till he was about sixteen years of age.

Before we dismiss the elder brother, we shall relate one anecdote of him which proves an affinity

finity to our hero.—He lived journeyman with a Mr. Creed, a salesman, in Rosemary-lane. If the reader should not perfectly know where Rosemary-lane is, we must inform him, that since many *gentlemen* of the cloth have sat up as salesmen there, the corners of the street have been white washed, and the place baptized with the above name, in lieu of the vulgar appellation of Rag-fair, which name it now no more deserves, than a Jew does that of Moses, or Nathan, who having long been ashamed of his family misfortunes, has washed away the stain by getting himself naturalized, and adopting the name of an honest Christian.

In Rosemary-lane then, if the reader pleases, lived Mr. Thomas Price, with the said Mr. Creed, and as Mr. Creed possessed that stock of old cloaths, which entitled him to the aforefaid distinction, viz. a gentleman, he used, very generously, to supply weekly all country markets round the metropolis, with such habits as were suitable to the different avocations of country folks, in order that the carter and the curate might go decently on one day in the week to one house together.—To these markets, Mr. Creed used to send his man Thomas with a cart load

load of different lots; and it happening, very unfortunately for Mr. Creed, as well as his family, that he was visited, in Tom's absence, by a certain bald-headed figure, who, hieroglyphically, carries an hour glass in one hand and a scythe in the other, and who was so rude and peremptory in this visit, that he would not be said, nay. Thomas, hearing of his master's departure, not only sold all the cloaths with which he was intrusted, but finding the horse incapable of performing the journey back again, and the cart being of no use to him without a horse, he disposed of the whole, amounting to somewhere about two hundred pounds, and mistaking his way back to the then Rag-fair, was so lost and bewildered, that he never could recover the road back again, till the late Sir Samuel Fludyer, who was the assignee, thought proper to pay a visit to his old friend and acquaintance Mr. Creed.

We must here, for a period, leave honest Thomas, whom we may have occasion to mention once or twice more at farthest, during our historical peregrination, and return to our hero.—We said, that these brothers differed in
their

their dispositions, that Thomas was bold, and Charles artful, in taking advantages; which term, we hope, no reader will, ill-naturedly, construe into thieving. The fact above stated is a proof of the boldness, and the following one of the art we mentioned, and will serve as illustrations of our description of characters.

One day, during the absence of his father, a sailor had staggered to Monmouth-street, to buy some cloaths, and was caught by our hero at that corner we before described to be so opportunely situated. He was soon ushered into a room, where it is so ingeniously contrived, that in the noon of a summer's day, it is hardly possible to distinguish a blue from a black, or a green from a blue coat. The honest tar was shewn a coat and waistcoat, the real value of which was under two guineas. They were soon whipped on, and although considerably too little, Charley so scientifically squeezed him up in them, that he persuaded the fellow they fitted him exactly.—The price being demanded, Charley declared upon his honour, that the lowest farthing he could take was five guineas. The tar, who simply believed that no man was

capable

capable of so solemn an assertion to any thing that was not strictly true, put his hand in his pocket, and laid down the money. Charley's cunning, which had never been deficient when an advantage could be taken in an honest way, suggested to him that five guineas, for an article worth but two, was hardly profit enough, and therefore stepped down to his father's journeyman below, under pretence of getting something to put the cloaths up in. To him Charley lamented his folly, adding, that "he had a *fine* " *flat* above stairs, and that he might as well " have had six guineas as five." "Do you," said he, "follow me up stairs, enquire what I " have done, appear as my father, pretend to be " very angry, swear they cost you six guineas, " give me two or three sham kicks and cuffs, " and I dare say we shall *nail* him for another " guinea." Charles, who though then but very young, was a considerable adept in distinguishing fools, and by no means deficient in discerning a rogue; no sooner therefore had he proposed this scheme of taking a little advantage of the fool, than he found that he had to soften a rogue to come into the measure. The journeyman pretended to remonstrate at the aforesaid little advantage,

advantage, even to hesitate at joining, in what he
 chose, at that moment, to describe as a glaring
 imposition: but Charley soon quieted his con-
 science, by adding, " You shall go halves in all
 we get above the five guineas."—This propo-
 sal brought the journeyman a peg lower, and our
 young hero, being rather in haste for fear of the
 father's return, totally relaxed all opposition, by
 promising another half guinea in case of com-
 pliance. The bargain thus struck, Charles re-
 turned to the tar, and began to pack up the suit,
 with many fine observations on the quality of
 the cloth, and its cheapness, when the jour-
 neyman appeared, and began to make enquiries
 about the price it was sold for. Charles re-
 plied, he had sold them but for five guineas;
 and the other pretending to look at certain E-
 gyptian characters made use of by all learned
 tradesmen, who chuse to keep their fair dealings
 a secret to the world, began to blame the young
 salesman for mistaking the marks, and swore
 the cloaths cost him more money out of his own
 pocket. A kind of aggravating reply, on the
 part of Charley, took place; the pretended
 father began to fulfill the aforefaid agreement
 between the said parties, by giving sham kicks
 an-

and cuffs, which the sailor taking to be so many broadsides on a defenceless enemy, cried out, "Avast, mate, don't send the little trader to the bottom, (for he was just then at the top of the stairs) if he has made a mistake, why, here's a guinea to repair the damage," and laying it down, departed, well pleased with his bargain; but much more so with having, by a professional generosity, saved the boy a good drubbing, by the insignificant trifle of a guinea.

As soon as the tar was gone, our hero would fain have broke his second engagement, but the journeyman being resolute, he was forced to give him one guinea out of six, in order that he might pocket three more. And though Mr. Price commended his son's sharpness when he gave him two guineas, he little thought how much he was indebted to that sharpness which taught his son to rob his father, and at the same time, make a tool of his journeyman.

Though this was one of those little advantages we before-mentioned, and such an ingenious trick of trade, as may perhaps, by a jury of commercial casuists, be brought in JUSTIFI-

ABLE

ABLE DISHONESTY; yet the event proved that it was the seed of a prolific knavery, which ripened by the dunghill of an over-reaching disposition, poisoned the soil it very rarely fertilizes to advantage.

With thy leave, gentle reader, we must stop here a little, and advert to an expression made use of just now by our hero, viz. a *fine flat*.—Perhaps thou hast never seen that justiciary man-trap called the POLICE, in Bow Street.—If thou hast not, know, that, in contradistinction to that epithet, there are in this great town, and in all towns in England, upon fair-days, gentlemen, who are at the man-trap aforesaid, declined as noun-adjectives, *sharps*; but if thou wouldst live into the very life and soul of this secret, thou wilt then find that these last are, in the Prig's dictionary, refined into the noun-substantive, *needles*.—Thou must know also, that these said *needles*, for we wish to make use of the proper technical term on the occasion, describe such tools as will purchase a ring value fifteen shillings, for fifty pounds; or venture a game at cards for a round sum with gentlemen, to whom they are perfect strangers, to be *flats*. One method by which these needles find out these

flats, is, by certain very strong lines in the countenance, which pourtray a very weak head, and another is, by a certain description of gentlemen, constantly wearing white silk stockings on a very wet or dirty day, when other men, a little wiser than themselves, carry black legs,—these are termed flats; but no man deserves the name of a *fine flat*, who is not either an idiot or an incredible dupe, and therefore it was with great classical propriety our hero called his sailor a *fine flat*, at the same time giving an early and living proof of his skill in that astrological science, by which he afterwards could so very cleverly distinguish characters by lines in the face and hands.

To return. Tradition also informs us, that Charley was no less dexterous in turning a text of scripture into ridicule, and that he was, on that account, esteemed as a very smart, subtle, penetrating lad. — When at Mr. Knollett's, the head class were employed in an exposition of the ten commandments, and when they came to the ninth,

Tu ne dirais point faux temoinage contre ton prochain,

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour,

our

our hero interpreted it in a double sense, and maintained that its other and fair interpretation was,

Thou may'st bear false witness for thy neighbour; for, argued Charles Price, jun. though the commandment forbids false testimony *against* a neighbour, yet it does not prohibit you from giving it *for* him; therefore, added he, if it had not meant to permit it, the commandment would have run,

Tu ne dirais point faux temoinage,

Thou shalt not bear false witness;

and then archly asked if every law did not allow what it does not expressly disallow? —

By the same sacred authority we are also informed, that having once been desired to explain the honorable distinction of F. R. S. he, without much hesitation, declared it to be FAT, RAGGED, and SAUCY.

How Charles Price, the elder, could mistake his son's forte, and put him to a tradesman, which he afterwards did, seems rather unaccountable; for, from this acute construction, he was certainly qualified to become a good barrister, or,

at least, a special attorney at law. But as our ill-luck, or ill-stars, will now and then play us a slippery trick, so that genius, which had hitherto acquired and preserved the good opinion of Mr. Price for his favourite son, seemed to have forsaken him, and by a cross-grained perverse accident, which in spite of all our plans, will now and then bring hidden things to light, let the father into a secret.—The Jew merchant, whom we beforementioned, happening to call again on Mr. Price, with another bargain, now saw our hero in the identical coat which Master Tommy had had on when the visit had been paid him at Monsieur Knollett's. And this circumstance is accounted for by the difference of the boys ages; for as Thomas was near two years older than Charles, so he was proportionably bigger, and that coat exactly fitting our hero, he had, by virtue of custom immemorial, and of which the age of man knoweth not to the contrary, been invested with the garb of his elder brother.—The Jew, therefore, was now as positive to Charles, as before he was certain to Thomas, and this produced such a doubt in the mind of Mr. Price, that had it not been for the accident beforementioned, respecting the cloaths, cart and horse of Mr. Creed, Thomas would

would certainly have been restored to favour. As matters stood, he was obliged to put up with a bad bargain, and as Charles stoutly denied the fact, and boldly called his accuser, "a lying *smouch*,"* so it rested, evermore, without further explanation.

But as all vice rises progressively, it was not long before the father experienced the effects of his son's genius. And with this observation we cannot but lament, that the method he took to rob his father, was an early indication of that scheme which led to his immediate destruction. Our hero had formed a connection with a youth of suitable principles with his own, and being between fifteen and sixteen years of age, they agreed upon an *excursion*. They each proposed ways and means, but Charley's companion not having it in his power to procure a sufficient sum for the purpose, our hero hit on an expedient as artful as availing. His father was out of town, and he forged a draft in his name, on a gentleman, with a letter, in which he requested the favour of twenty pounds for an immediate purpose. The gentleman accepted it, and his

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banker

* *Smouch* is a term of ridicule applied to Jews, but we understand not its derivation.

banker paid the sum, which Charley obtained, and was never seen for a week afterwards, when he and his companion were found at a house of reception in Covent Garden. It is easy enough to conceive the confusion between Mr. Price and the gentleman, when they first met, and how shocked the father must have been at such an instance of depraved ingenuity in his son. He readily paid the money, and had not the transaction happened between friends, our hero, perhaps, would then have paid that fee to a certain esquire of the county of Middlesex, of which he, lately, so ill-naturedly deprived him, when in custody for forgery in Tothilfields Bridewell.

Numberless had been his tricks and knaveries, but this last determined his father to get rid of him, and, for that purpose, he put him apprentice to a hatter and hosier in St. James's Street. He also gave with him a considerable premium to his master, hoping that his conduct, when from home, would be quite different from what it had been under his own roof, and that he would never dare to take those liberties with a master, he had done with a father.—Though this is a very common opinion, yet it is as vague as it is common,

common. The son that will trick a father will cheat a master, and he that will cheat a master will rob all the world.—It is something like sending a reprobate to sea to mend his manners. The chance of his being drowned is, indeed, in their favour; but the old proverb of

He that is born to be hanged will never be drowned, militates, and very forcibly too, against the sorrowful, and often woefully experienced expedient.

When about seventeen years of age, he was apprenticed as aforesaid, and there he had not been long, before his master had almost as much reason to complain of him as his father. Among his other tricks, was the following extraordinary one. He robbed his father of an elegant suit of cloaths, in which he dressed himself and went to his master, of whom he purchased about ten pounds worth of silk stockings; left his address, *Benjamin Bolingbroke, Esq. Hanover Square*, and ordered them to be sent him in an hour's time, when he would pay the person who brought them. Incredible as it may appear, his master did not know him, and to complete the cheat, our hero came back in half an hour, in his usual dress, was ordered to take the goods home, which he actually pretended to do, and thus

robbed

robbed both master and father. This was the last trick, however, he had in his power to play either of them; for being detected, he ran away from the former, and the latter, in detection of his principles, disinherited him as was before mentioned, of that share which otherwise would have fallen to him at his father's decease.

Having thus left both, he entered into society and became a member of it on his own account; nor can there be much room to doubt but that the idea of disguising himself, which he has practised for so many years past, was suggested to him by the circumstance of having been brought up where he had opportunities to shift his cloaths as he pleased.

It was not long, however, before, by dint of application made by friends, and promises of reform made by our hero, that he got recommended as a clerk to a merchant in the city, with whom he lived, to the great surprise of all his friends and acquaintance, for upwards of a twelve month, before he had recourse to those *little advantages* we have already so often men-

tioned.

tioned. History is in the dark with regard to this gentleman, but has thrown some light on his residence, which was Broad-street; that he dealt very largely abroad; and it has also recorded that singular dexterity by which he appropriated several sums of money, amounting in the whole to near three hundred pounds, to his own use, which ought to have been carried to the creditor side of his master's accounts, and to which, severe honesty might give the odious appellation of robbing his master.

The method he took to do this was as follows. He used frequently to be sent out with notes of hand and bills of exchange, as well accepted as for acceptance. Some of the notes, which were duly honoured, he would pretend were not paid, nor the party in town to honour them, and thereby gained a temporary supply.—The bills which were for acceptance, he would get accepted, and pretend that he had left them; and those which were accepted, he would get the cash, and make his entries accordingly. Thus he went on from day to day, mortgaging a note of hand for a bill of exchange, and redeeming a bill of exchange by mortgaging a note of hand, till hav-

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ing *appropriated*, we will not say stolen, near three hundred pounds, he liquidated the whole of the deficiency by suddenly decamping to Holland.

He was about twenty years of age at the time of this decampment, and therefore, as a debt due to the dignity of manhood, for the future we must call him Mr. Price, or if we should be inclined to change that title, we must, as a debt due to the dignity of this little history, stile him, "our Hero;" for if ever a genius in profligate deception merited that distinction, it must have been Mr. Price, and it would be dishonouring our history not to give the devil his due.

We are here involuntarily led into a short digression.

When FIELDING wrote his History of a GREAT MAN, the hero of his tale possessed no other requisites for such an appellation, than having been at the head of a gang of pitiful pick-pockets, foot-pads, and receivers of stolen goods. We hardly need inform the reader, that we allude to his life of JONATHAN WILD.

Such, however, were the abilities of the ingenious

genious author, that, in his hands, the life of the lowest reptile gave very high satisfaction.

The History of CHARLES PRICE differs as much from that of JONATHAN WILD, as the face of a chimney-sweeper does from the complexion of prince Oroonoko.

The lives of the famous Czar Peter, and Charles XII. by Voltaire, afforded that genius an opportunity of displaying his wit, by the most laconic and satyrical transposition. He styled the king, Charles the Great, and the emperor, the Great Peter.

This forcible distinction of characters is applicable to the two first-mentioned great men. Mr. Wild must remain as the GREAT JONATHAN, but *our* hero, Mr. Price, will for ever live as CHARLES THE GREAT.

As history has now sent our hero out of England, the reader, perhaps, will be a little curious to know what passed in it during the travels of our young gentleman. We have mentioned an exploit of Mr. Thomas Price's with
Mr.

Mr. Creed, but as we are not bound to relate any more of the elder brother's character than is necessary, and serves to grace our history, so we need not recapitulate what is unnecessary, and what would tend only to lessen the dignity of the great man who is the subject of these Memoirs.—The father of both of them, was now taken ill.—The little bit of lace, that childish trick, preyed very foolishly on his mind, and he was ridiculous enough to let the forgery, which was explained as the effect of a bad head and not a bad heart, make him a little uneasy. The experiment played off with so much success upon our hero's first master, which was described as an ingenious artifice, had soured his father's repose a little; and the frivolous freedom he took with the merchant, did, with a few other similar trifles, neither more nor less than, break his father's heart, who expired on the 13th of November, 1750, having first taken particular care, by the assistance of a worthy solicitor, his particular friend, to properly reward those two offsprings of duty and honesty, by bequeathing them each, as we before said, that mark of parental affection, ONE SHILLING.

Now Harry Fielding, where is thy great man?

man? where is thy hero, the great Jonathan? Did he ever sacrifice a father to his rapacity? Did any, or all of his actions break a father's heart? Certainly not, though he died at the upper end of Oxford Road, in the 47th year of his age! Whereas, be it remembered, that in the 20th year of the reign of our sovereign deceiver, Charles, without the grace of God, and in the year aforesaid, did, nobly and manfully hasten a sick father's departure, and mercifully, contributed all that lay in his power to rid him of his earthly sufferings: and, that his filial affection might be remembered for ever, sent his body in a hearse, to be buried in the parish church-yard of St. Mary, Lambeth, on the 17th day of November, in the year aforesaid, being the first day on which Westminster Bridge was opened for the accommodation of all passengers, whether on foot, horseback, or in carriages.

Let us therefore now leave England, and with it, Mr. Price, the elder; who, we hope, feels the effect of that sacred and pious monumental inscription,

Requiescat in pace,

and return to our hero, whom we must now accompany on his travels during his stay in Holland, happy in him if we could adhere to that

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wife

wise and ancient maxim, "*De mortuis nil nisi bonum*," for it was founded in charity to the dead—it humanely supposed that the deceased had some good qualities to counterpoise his bad ones, and therefore that the latter ought to glide, with the body, into a silent grave: but Mr. Price was an exception to the supposition. With a thousand bad qualities, those who knew him most intimately cannot recollect, that he had even one good one; and not having it in our power to relate any of his virtues, truth and justice will not permit us to bury his vices.

When great men travel incog. in order to avoid the ceremonies due to their characters, they often choose to change their names.—It was thus with our hero.—He was a great man, he travelled incog. and not chusing to encounter the incumbrance of that ceremony, which could not fail of attending him in Holland, had his real dignity been discovered, he avoided all public distinctions by adopting the name of Johnson.—Now, though it is well known here, that the names of Johnson, Smith, Brown, &c. &c. belong frequently to very great men, nay, even to such gents who pretend to carry a commission, yet

yet the Mynheers know nothing of the distinction; nor whether they issue from his Majesty's War Office, or the Office of the Sheriff of Middlesex.—For instance, if a gentleman in distress wants to carry himself incog. for a while, he often calls himself Captain Johnson; and if the gentleman whose business it is to add to that distress, by virtue of such his commission, would wish to borrow him for a short time, in order to tap his shoulder securely, he assumes the name of Captain Brown, because, although these said last mentioned gentlemen do not understand the Latin proverb,

Pares cum paribus facillime congregantur.

yet they have a thorough knowledge of the translation,

Birds of a feather flock together;

and, therefore, know it is as wise to set a captain to catch a captain, as it is to “set a thief to catch a thief.”

Mr. Johnson then, if the reader pleases, was now in Holland, and there he insinuated himself into the good graces of a diamond merchant, by the means of the very singular blessing which brought him at last to Tothil Fields Bridewell. Having read in the public papers the death

of his city master, it occurred to him that, a letter of recommendation from a dead man might be more serviceable to him than any character he could get from a living one.—He, therefore very ingeniously, made his dead master write a letter in his favour, which he presented to the merchant who used to correspond with him, properly antedated, for we would not wish our hero to be thought deficient in such minutiae recommending him as a young gentleman in search of a Welch uncle's fortune, who sailed from Amsterdam to the Spice Islands, in or about the year 1730, which was the period of our hero's birth, and who had been said to have returned there exceeding rich, and was thought to be dead, as the family had never heard from him since.

This letter Mr. Johnson presented, and was received with every possible civility a Dutchman could shew. His uncle having been in the spice trade was a peculiar recommendation, and, perhaps, Mynheer had an eye to what he might get by his assistance in case the uncle or the uncle's fortune could be discovered. Be it as it would, or whether it was civility to his London correspondent,

correspondent, we know not, our hero was invited home. Every possible search was made, tradesmen, captains, and merchants, were examined, many Johnsons traced, but not the right one.—In short, after a few months enquiry, Mr. Johnson and the merchant agreed to give up the search, the former now pretending to be so enamoured of Amsterdam, that he wished to remain there during his whole life.

What our hero's views were, will be seen in the sequel. The merchant proposed to take him into his counting house, and Mr. Johnson acquiescing with the proposal, actually became a clerk to the gentleman, on whom he had so artfully imposed.—In this capacity he lived near two years, without having taken any little advantage of his master; but, in order to keep his hand in, he took a very great one of his master's daughter—First he debauched, and got her with child, under pretence of marriage, and secondly, in order to avoid the natural resentment, persuaded her to rob her father, and run away with him to England. Things were in this situation, when the honest Dutchman was so charmed with his clerk's abilities, his assiduity, and good qualities,

that he actually made him an offer of his daughter in marriage, provided he would stay and settle in that country. The reader, perhaps, will be surprized at our hero's declining that offer, as there was an advantage in it, especially if he has not bestowed some small portion of his time in the perusal of the human heart; but we, who profess a considerable knowledge in the above scientific folio, know, that Mr. Johnson acted in strict consistency to his own principles by this refusal, and that he could not comply with the father's request, compatibly with his own character. As he had been many years pre-determined never to do what the vulgar call an honest act, so neither faith, honour, nor interests could persuade him to it now. Besides, having enjoyed her favours, she had committed the same offence against him, as the Queen had against the royal hero, who, like ours, came into the world to bite mankind,—she had *out-lived his liking*. Not that Mr. Johnson had, from any over-nice sensations, a particular objection to her fortune on that score, but he could not be induced by that ridiculous tie of nature, so pathetically described by Dr. Armstrong,

— O,

————— *O, let no parents woe,
No plaints of trusting innocence, nor tears
Of pining beauty, blast thy guilty joys.*

to make a fond girl and an affectionate father happy. His heart was steel against such weaknesses and it would be the extreme of folly to conceive that a hero, determined never to be an honest man, should ever think of making an honest woman. Well, therefore, may we caution the beautiful part of the creation against those who stile themselves the most *noble* part of it, and say, with the same poet,

*Be frugal then : the coyly yielded kifs
Charms most, and gives the most sincere delight.
Cheapness offends.*

We before said, that Mr. Johnson had persuaded the frow to rob her father and run away with him to England.—Not that he meant any such thing, for that would have had such a seeming of justice, in the midst of the basest ingratitude, that we do not wish our reader even to suspect our hero of it.—True it is he wanted her to rob her father, but he by no means wanted her compliance with his requests to attend him to
England.

England.—He had other and far nobler motives, which were, to get possession of the property and then leave her,

*To waste in sickly grief her once-prized charms,
Forlorn to languish out her life, to lead
Despised, unwedded, her dishonoured days!*

He who had broke his own father's heart, would not scruple to break the heart of his mistress, and, by way of giving a good blessing into the bargain, throw that of her father's into the scale. With his eye therefore solely to the father's purse, he continued a forced affection to the daughter. We say *forced*, because he was not so weak as to entertain an affection for any man or woman whatever.—Friendship indeed, he often professed, but then his professions were so many fish-hooks; and so good a judge was he of the stream in which he angled, that he never threw his bait without striking his trout.

But as the time now began to approach, when the Dutchman must soon have convincing proofs of his clerk's gratitude to him, and affection for his daughter, by that tell-tale appearance, which, in its legal way, is the greatest pride of the sex,

sex, and, in its illegal one, their greatest shame, so Mr. Johnson found it necessary to quicken his measures. Notwithstanding all possible precaution, the old man had observed a something in his daughter's conduct, that indicated a favourable opinion of the clerk, and this had been his motive for the offer before mentioned. When once the eye of a parent is awakened, every thing that tends to increase his suspicions are

Confirmations strong as proofs of holy writ;

and as Mr. Johnson was no stranger to those suspicions, he, with his usual stratagem, endeavoured to remove them.—Having prepared the daughter, in case the question should be asked, to express a dislike to his person, under pretence of concealing their amour (for he was too much of a politician to go so far with his mistress as to ask her for a refusal of marriage, should it be proposed) he next prepared the father to put the question to his daughter, by distantly entering on the subject of matrimony. In this conversation the Dutchman renewed the proposal, and our hero, with very high professions of esteem, duty, and gratitude, accepted the offer in case of the young lady's compliance, who, he earnestly intreated, might have no restraint laid on her inclinations, that so, the honour

nour done him might be the more considerably enhanced.

In the fullness of joy, the old man embraced his future son-in-law, and, like a fond affectionate father, proposed it to his daughter that very afternoon.—These were his arguments—She was his only child, he was advanced in years, she had lost a kind tender mother when very young, and, if he should die without seeing her settled, she would be left exposed to the world an unprotected orphan, which would considerably add to his afflictions in his latter days—that he considered her happiness as his own, and hoped the request he had to make to her would be the means of increasing both; but if he judged wrong, he never more would mention the subject to her. He then concluded proposing Mr. Johnson to her for a husband, recommending him in warm terms, and hoped for her acquiescence.

As the Dutchman and his daughter were made of different materials from our hero, so they discovered, during this *tête-à-tête*, a mutual weakness which he most thoroughly despised—Their eyes often swam in tears, and as he caught

caught her in his arms, they glistened like the
 dews of heaven falling from a full blown rose on
 the infant bud beneath. Something, that we
 call sympathy, took place; it was such a divine
 emanation, as when soul meets soul in heavenly
 embrace. To be plain, the duty and obedience
 of a daughter, joined to a most tender affec-
 tion, as they coincided with her own sentiments,
 so they prevailed over her lover's instructions,
 and instead of expressing a dislike, she confessed
 an inclination to Mr. Johnson.

We hope no ill-natured reader will set this
 confession down to the artful design of making
 Mr. Johnson fall into his own trap—if he does,
 he knows nothing of that folio volume we have
 just mentioned; for we can assure him, that so
 far from it, it proceeded solely from that ten-
 derness into which she was melted by an in-
 dulgent father, and which nothing can with-
 stand, but a heart formed like that of our hero's,
 i. e. of the blackest marble.

Elated with his success, the old man commu-
 nicated to Mr. Johnson the consent of his daugh-
 ter, who, though it at first a little disconcerted
 him,

him, soon recovered that presence of mind which is necessary to conceal those views when we mean to deceive our best benefactors. He, therefore, with a wonderful celerity, assumed a grateful countenance, and ran over with a profusion of thanks for such a condescension. This circumstance is an *exhibit*, as the lawyers phrase it.—The reader must understand that an exhibit in law, is a document, or a few lines in writing, produced and read in evidence. Now, an *exhibit* in nature, are those few lines which can be contracted in the countenance, or distended in conversation, and given in evidence, just as the exhibitor pleases, either to give such a turn and complexion to his looks as are directly-opposite to his meaning; or to give such a turn and meaning to his words as are exactly correspondent to his looks.—In this art, Mr. Johnson, or Mr. Price, or our hero, for we care not which he is considered by, though we must confess, we set some value upon the latter, was a consummate adept; and having ended his harangue to the father, he repaired, and by the latter's desire, to the daughter, but with far different views from that which he professed. As soon as he had reached the *Sanctum Sancto-*

rum of his mistress, the scene of all his guilty
 joys, he began to mutter his displeasure, and
 from upbraidings, he rose gradually to that kind
 of language which is as coarse as the soul that
 uses it. Having betrayed a young innocent
 creature, it is no wonder that he should insult
 her, and one of his tender questions was, Do
 you think, Madam, I shall marry a —, mak-
 ing use of a word, which would be a stain to the
 delicacy of this history, and with which he left
 her to reflect at leisure.

This part of his character reminds us of an-
 other expression of his, not in Newgate, but in
 Tothill-fields Bridewell, to Mr. Fenwick, whose
 conduct as Governor there, does equal credit to
 his humanity and resolution.

*“ Had it not been for my impetuosity of temper,
 I might have been now worth an hundred thousand
 pounds.”*

Having then in his recollection, no doubt, this
 particular circumstance, as well as many other
 corresponding ones ; which served him for no
 other purpose than as a foil to his dexterity, and
 E with

with which recollection, dame Nature bountifully curses those demons who can gild their villainies by the most abject of all flatteries.

In fine, by the most servile assiduities, he gained the unbounded confidence of the father; and matters now coming to a crisis, that is, wife, or no wife, he chose the latter. Finding also the girl reluctant to the robbery, and urgent for a husband, he preferred five hundred pounds as a thief, to five thousand pounds as an honest man; with which sum he decamped, leaving them both to lament their credulity. He suddenly took shipping for England. The daughter died soon after in child-bed, and the father followed her in a few months, a sacrifice to parental affliction, after bemoaning his child's misfortune, and cursing the author of their complicated miseries.

From his infancy, to the age of twenty-three, we have hitherto traced our hero with a pretty tolerable accuracy. By this time, the reader, perhaps, will form a tolerable shrewd guess at that capability of his, which is to wind up the catastrophe of this history. We purposely left out
several

Several *pretty infantine pranks*, that strongly marked the head and heart of Mr. Price ; and like a judicious painter, who throws all his *minutiæ* into the back ground, brought forward only those figures which strike the eye as *great actions*, totally omitting the frivolous, for which, no doubt, the reader will be exceedingly obliged to us.— For this purpose, we forbear to dwell upon a little advantage he took of the captain who brought him to England ; only observing, that he shewed him a small *billet doux* from a banker in London, which had accidentally slipped into his pocket, and which our hero had designedly sanctified by the initials of his late master whilst on shipboard. That on his arrival in his native isle, pretending to have no cash, he produced that billet, appointed the captain to meet him on the Dutch walk the next day at 'change time, to pay him for board and lodging, but took particular care never to view that noble mart, till Mynheer had sailed for the land of Dykes.

History must halt here a little, and leave her hero for a year or so. Indeed she would not wish to stain the record of renown, by a multiplicity of those *petty advantages* which her fa-

vourite took of all who had the happiness of his acquaintance, similar to that he took of his Dutch captain. But as the above lady, whose delight is in genuine truths, and we heartily wish it was every lady's delight, (for then we should neither hear of great ladies made little, nor little ladies made great) so she kept a continual eye on the *great actions* of this gentleman, whom she knew was one day or other to be the subject of her immortal pen, and discovers him to us, a third time, in the capacity of a clerk to his Majesty's naval small beer brewer, at Weorvil, near Gosport.

And now, gentle reader, prepare thyself to hear something that will excite thy astonishment, —something that will surprise thee more than all that thou hast yet read of our hero,—he neither robbed his master, broke his heart, or debauched his daughter. Not but that during his clerkship, something happened worthy of being handed down to posterity; but then it was a circumstance that, we hope, will give the majority of our readers a sensation far different from what they have already felt.

Mr.

Mr. Price, for we must now call him so, had lived a whole twelvemonth with credit and reputation, not chusing to make any further *eclat* for the present.

There is, in every man's life, although born a rogue, a period, when some preventive power, in charity perhaps to mankind, will frustrate his designs.—Perhaps it is that same power which by an act of justice to one, and in pity to the other, rescues the latter from the harpy claws of the former, thereby judiciously informing her children, that knavery shall not always succeed;—at the same time giving a lesson of admonition to her frail sons to quit their former practices, and by throwing a dash on their designs, alarm them to a life of virtue.—Whatever power it be, we leave it to the more able theologian to demonstrate. It is our business to make ourselves understood by all, and we cannot better explain ourselves than by saying, Mr. Price had a *spoke put in his wheel*,—perhaps some malicious satyrist might insinuate, that the *Eo*, *Meo*, and *Ereo*, who had stuck so close to our hero, had now forsaken him.—Be it as it will,

we must record the fact, and let the reader make his comments and determine for himself.

The art of insinuation was so strongly moulded with the other component parts, that Mr. Price had worked the same progress into the heart of the great small beer brewer, as it had into the heart of the Dutch merchant. When our hero's character is considered, this circumstance perhaps will not be thought *striking*, but then it was accompanied with another, which, whenever two things exactly correspond, in two different places, with two different persons, so as to increase our surprise, we term it *very odd*. And this *very odd* expression, is a very laconic way of saying a great deal in two words.—It prevents reasoning upon unaccountable events, and leaves the verbal historian at liberty to proceed.—In fact, the brewer was so pleased with the address, the skill, the integrity, the application, the industry, and what is still more, the HONESTY of his clerk, that he seriously proposed, what the diamond merchant had done before him, a match with his daughter!

Those two proposals of marriage, from gentlemen

men of fortune and character, to a gentleman without really either, are better illustrations of our hero's dexterity, and early skill in the human heart, than any thing we could say on the subject. Nor was Mr. Price so blind to his good fortune now, as to reject an offer so favourable to him. He readily embraced it, and there is very little reason to doubt, but that he had now and then called himself a fool for his refusal of the Dutchman's daughter, and thought it prudent to repair an act of folly, by another of proportionate wisdom. We may also fairly conclude, that as his years ripened, his judgment was matured, and that he now thought if he married the daughter, very little afterwards remained for him to do, to send the father to a work-house ; for it was not his disposition ever to share profits and emoluments with any man, but to be at the head of the house himself. His motto was, *aut Cæsar aut nullus* ; and that it was nobler to hold a whip and flog a dray-horse, than have a partner in his Majesty's small beer brewery.—With this view, therefore, he accepted the offer, and matters were in a fine train, when the whole brewing was spoiled by

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an ingredient which accidentally infused itself into the wort.—

This *ingredient* was the appearance of a gentleman, who has already made some little figure in this our history.—It happened, that the honest Jew, who had purchased of our hero the bit of lace we before mentioned, had settled at Portsmouth as a salesman, i. e. a vender of old cloaths; and got some little reputation there, among *honest* sailors, for his generosity in advancing money upon the slender security of Wills and Powers.—Not that he always was successful by it, for though, sometimes, he might gain an hundred pounds by advancing five; yet, it now and then happened, that when he came to secure the wages and prize-money, the whole advance was sunk, by finding, that there were six or seven other of the same legal instruments laying equal claim, and that, *first come first served*, was an excellent adage as well in the navy office, and agents office, as in his Majesty's dock yards of Portsmouth, Plymouth, &c.

With this Jew merchant, there came to live another celebrated gentleman, whom the reader has

as before heard some little of.—It was no less than Mr. Thomas Price, first brother to our hero, Charles, who finding by the Jew, in what a respectable and unexpected situation his brother lived, would needs claim the honour of his affinity. For this purpose he went over to Weovil, and paid him a visit, where he was not received with that tenderness and affection, which those gentry of the North, who have acquired consequence here by their situations about the court, manifest to all poor relations, who have the presumption to claim kindred, and the audacity to make that claim in *propria persona*. *

Mr. Charles Price, however, did not, on the first appearance of his brother Thomas, treat him with that *hauteur*, which from the natural im-

* We know an instance of this in such a consequential lady. She was visited by her niece, just come from Scotland. And pray, who are you? asked the great woman. I thought, madam, replied the niece, my letter had informed you.—O, ay, I had forgot; let me see—you are the daughter of Mrs. —, of —? Yes, madam, answered the niece, and I always understood she was your sister—Why yes, replied the aunt, it is true, that your mother is my sister; but, added she, with a frown, pray what relation are you? and dismissed her without having asked her to take a chair.

petuosity

petuosity of his temper might have been suspected. He had the art of correcting his passions, and making them subservient to his interest, and was an adept in that species of flattery distinguished by us under the word *palaver*. He was servile to extreme meanness, when his servility could be recompenced by a shilling; and was master of the most consummate effrontery and impudence, after he had robbed the owner of it.—It was not to be wondered at, therefore, that he received his brother with a smile, brimful of fraternal complacency. In this he had more than one view. By behaving civilly he secured his silence, and by securing his silence he thought himself safe, and at liberty in his present projects—He was, therefore, abundant in his professions of esteem and promises, and the little bit of lace was now a subject of much mirth and good humour between the two brothers.

It was not, however, without some mixture of concern, that he found his brother lived with the aforesaid Jew merchant, whom our hero had honoured with the appellation of a *lying smouch*. This dignity the Jew had not forgot, if he had

and he never could have been a true-born Israelite, and our hero paid dear for it, which, in time, the reader will see.

The discourse between Charles and Thomas we beg pardon for placing the younger first, which we would by no means have done but (he is our hero) formed a conversation of two complete characters, fully in possession of each others *foibles*. — They buried those foibles in potent draughts of good English ale, called each another *dear Tom* and *dear Charles*, and parted with the pleasing satisfaction of having over-reached each other, first shaking hands, then shaking heads, and crying, you are a sorry rogue—though you are my brother.

As there is no doubt but Mr. Charles Price, had he been established in the brewery, would have denied his brother, so there is as little reason to doubt, that he owned his brother, in order to secure the establishment.—What inclines us more especially to think so is, that having, once since that period, been applied to by the brother, and that within these few years, he not only refused to relieve him, although in very good circumstances,

circumstances, but actually vowed he would never acknowledge a man for a brother, who was, with shame and grief, we are obliged to repeat it—such an *infernal rascal*.

Let us return.—When Mr. Thomas Price made his exit from his more worthy brother, the master of the aforesaid brewery happening to be in the way, saw the very friendly salutes just mentioned.—He questioned Mr. Charles Price as to the nature of the visitor, who he was, and what he wanted. But, as the devil will, now and then, *put an enemy into our throats to steal away our senses*, so our hero, being a little mellowed with liquor, and flustrated with the interrogatories, hesitated a little for an answer; but his good friend, the gentleman above-mentioned, not his *master*, stepping in to his assistance, Mr. Price boldly replied, “It was a publican from Portsmouth, who wanted credit for beer, whom he thought not fit to be trusted, and therefore got rid of his custom by parting with him civilly.”

This answer reminds us of the reply of that celebrated deceased wit, Samuel Foote, Esq;

to his Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, who being in the Green-Room when Mr. Foote's brother, who was a clergyman, had let his tongue run, for no other purpose than to convince his Royal Highness, that he was in possession of as much folly as his brother was master of wit : As soon as he retired, his Highness asked, Who is that man, Sam ?

That man, said the wit, oh, he is a mad clergyman, that always thinks himself in the pulpit."

We were led into the above digression, if such it can be called, on recollecting, that that great wit, and our great man, were afterwards concerned together in a brewery, in which the former had very substantial reasons for lamenting the acquaintance, which we shall hereafter more fully let the reader into. We are also the more excusable, as the point, in some measure, applies.—The one disowned his brother, thro' fear of his knavery ; the other, in contempt of his ignorance.

The above answer, however, not being quite satisfactory to the brewer, he took no further

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notice,

notice ; but quitting the yard, had the curiosity, unfortunately for Mr. Price, to watch his brother to Portsmouth, and traced him to the house of the said Jew with whom Thomas lived. Into this house the brewer entered, and under pretence of purchasing some articles in the sloop way, artfully drew the Jew into a conversation relative to his man. He now found the visitor, whom his clerk had described as a Portsmouth publican, wanting credit for beer, to be, *ipso facto*, a servant to this salesman. Having thereby found his clerk out in a lie, he began, in a moment, to conceive, that the gentleman, whom he had for near two years considered as a very good young man, and whom he esteemed so much as to offer to make him his son-in-law, to be a very bad young man, and no way deserving of such a favour.—In order, therefore, to prove whether his suspicions were well or ill-founded, he asked the Jew,—if he knew where his servant had been that afternoon ?

As there are questions, the direct answers to which may be avoided, so there are questions to which direct answers must be given. The great art is the *quo modo* of putting them. There
are

are persons also, who know when to evade, and when to speak to the point. In this science, none have more skill than the children of Israel.

As soon as an interrogatory applies, in the most distant manner, to their own personal safety, the *honest* part of these children, will, in spite of all other considerations and inclination to the contrary, tell the truth, and the whole truth, though it tuck up in one string, father, mother, sister, and brother; such is their strict regard to justice. But as soon as they find their own personal safety out of danger, they pay very little regard either to truth or justice. We wish to be understood, only, of those sons of straw, who are better known at Westminster Hall, and the Old Bailey, than at the Synagogue.

The salesman had no sooner heard the question, than imagining that his servant, who had been out that day on his *pleasures*, might have met with a little *profit* on the way, and thereby killed two birds with one stone, thought he could not act more prudently than by directly

informing the brewer, he had been to —, to see his BROTHER. At the same time, he looked at his customer with much larger eyes than nature had bestowed on him, by artfully stretching them to their utmost extent, in expectation of hearing of some little foible of his servant.—In this he was however disappointed. As soon as the brewer had, to his great surprise, discovered what his clerk had with so much awkward caution concealed, he then, naturally enough, began to be a little more minute in his enquiries ; and from having asked where his servant had been, he demanded of the Jew if he knew that brother ?

We should not have been so very particular in this conversation, if the latter question had not been one of the utmost importance to, and very unfortunate for our hero. What increased the misfortune was, the person to whom the question was put.—The epithet *Smouch*, rose in judgment against him, though it had been dead twelve years ; and consequently, there was not a tittle of Mr. Charles Price's qualifications, which, on the principle of the Levitical law, (*an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth*) Mr. Moses

Moses did not depict, in far more livelier shapes and colours, than ever he was painted by us, his faithful historians.—He ran it through

Even from his boyish days to the very hour in which he bade him tell it.

Having finished the whole length picture, he threw his ornaments into the back ground, by assuring the brewer, that his clerk's brother had not seen him before for years, was quite ashamed to have such a brother, and was a very honest lad, or he would not keep him in his service.

And here, reader, let us remind thee of the actual necessity of telling the truth, and of the dangerous delusive idea,—*that the truth is not to be told at all times.* Good people have never an occasion to tell a lie; and bad ones always hurt their cause by their own dexterity.—Had our hero told the truth at Weovil, he might never have been blown up at Portsmouth; no enquiries might have ensued, nor any curiosity excited to make those enquiries. Just, therefore, is that maxim, which says, "The truth must serve a good cause, and a lie never fails of injuring a

bad one," the force of which, Mr. Price, very soon, and most unexpectedly, experienced.

The next morning, our hero was summoned to his destiny. The brewer informed him, that having suspected him of an untruth, about the visitor on the preceding day, he had been induced to satisfy himself; and as he detested a lie, he was sorry to find his clerk tell one.—Whether this introductory discourse put Mr. Price to the blush or no, we are not certain, for we would not wish to say any thing tending to disgrace him in the opinion of our readers; but true it is, that it excited certain tumults and agitations in his mind, which drove him, like a ship in distress, tossed from wave to wave, and the sport of winds blowing from every quarter of the compass.—In short, the combat in his mind was, whether he should confess the truth, or boldly support one lie by another, as he expected the storm ready to break on his head.—But nobly scorning, in the midst of all his danger, to adopt so cowardly an expedient, by trusting to the long-boat of truth, before he had time to muster up resolution enough to stick to the wreck,

wreck, he was released from the conflict by his master, who thus addressed him.

“ Mr. Price, (for he now omitted his former
 “ familiar epithet of Charles) you may have
 “ your reasons for disowning your brother, and
 “ your brother may have the same reasons for
 “ disowning you. Those reasons I do not wish
 “ to hear.—I intended to make you my son-in-
 “ law, give you the business, and retire in my
 “ old age, with the comfortable satisfaction of
 “ having bestowed my daughter with happiness
 “ to herself and a credit to me; but that is im-
 “ possible, if I make you her husband.—Never
 “ think, therefore, further of this marriage. But
 “ if you wish to continue my clerk, as you have
 “ hitherto behaved yourself in a manner I can-
 “ not find fault with, I have no objection to
 “ continue you in that capacity. (Here our hero
 “ bowed very respectfully, almost down to the
 “ ground; but as soon as he was raised, the
 “ brewer added,) But it is upon condition, Sir,
 “ you find me security for thirty thousand
 “ pounds.”

Little flashes of lightening will make some
 ladies

ladies shut their eyes, and a distant clap of thunder will throw others into a swoon.—There are some men who, at the squeaking of a pig, cannot, as Shakespear expresses it, *contain their urine*.—There are others so unnerved, on very little occasions, as to appear like puritans in a thunder storm.—These are ladies and gentlemen of very weak compositions.—But there are men, whose firm nerves, like Macbeth's, never tremble.—These have great souls, and of this composition was our hero.—He was, indeed, a little disconcerted at the rejection of him as a son-in-law ; but at the proposal of a security for thirty thousand pounds, he stood undaunted ; nay, he even put on one of those smiles that dame nature had so happily blessed him with, and which conveyed to his master an idea, that such a security was a *bagatelle*, and that his conduct and character in life, intitled him to a security for double that sum.

But, as he was seldom at a loss to get into a scrape, so one of his great merits was, a readiness and dexterity to get out of it.—He, therefore, instantly replied, “ That he could easily
 “ satisfy his master on that subject, if he had li-
 “ berty to go to London. That he had friends
 “ there,

“ there, who, on a personal application, would
 “ give security for him, to the amount of an
 “ hundred thousand pounds; and concluded,
 “ requesting leave of absence for a week.”
 This was what he used to call, putting a good
 face upon a bad cause.

The former having been readily granted, our
 hero begged he might have the honour of seeing
 the young lady before his departure; but this re-
 quest was as positively refused, as the other was
 complied with, and Mr. Price thought proper to
 decamp the next morning, without the satisfac-
 tion of seeing either his master or his mistress.

There was no occasion, indeed, for his seeing
 the former; for as he happened to be a man
 that would not be trifled with, so, he had pru-
 dently desired his clerk to deliver up some
 keys, together with some portable commodities,
 cypleped guineas and bank notes, on the over-
 night. He thought it possible, if he left ac-
 counts unsettled for one night, they might re-
 main so for ever; and, wisely taking time by
 the forelock, secured five or six hundred
 pounds, for fear of any trifling mistake, or lit-
 tle accident the next morning.

Our

Our hero, whose great breast was full of wrath and revenge against his old friend the Jew, and a settled hatred to so wicked a fellow as his brother, determined to take Portsmouth in his way to town, and pay a visit to the two said gentleman.—For this purpose, very early the next morning he decamped from Weovil, not *hand in hand*, like the first pair driven from Paradise, abashed and ashamed, but full of rage and resentment; and alone,

Towards Portsmouth, took his solitary way.

The world laying all before him where to chuse.

Taking that gentleman for his guide, whose spite and malice had before driven our first parents from the garden of Eden.

In a disposition of mind, truly to be envied by all great men, *i. e.* full of diabolical revenge, he reached Gosport, which lay in his way from Weovil to Portsmouth. There he took the ferry over—The reader, who has not already been there, must be informed that he cannot get from Gosport to Portsmouth, without venturing over the said ferry. We call it *venturing*, because, although in day time it is full as safe as a government mail coach, yet
in

in the evening, the case is widely different. The ferrymen, and there are a great number of them, who very kindly conduct you over for a poor penny, are sometimes in liquor, or rather pretend to be so; therefore, though it is not much to be wondered at, will accidentally stagger against you, by virtue whereof a passenger is often in danger of tasting salt water.—Should he complain, or resent this conduct, a blow accompanies the complaint, and the difference is, that instead of the passenger tasting salt water, salt water fish taste him; but the bottom of the ocean is sure not to be enriched with either his purse or his watch. This small portion of local history may not perhaps be useless, as the reader may gather from it, that if he is ever compelled to the like conveyance, by doing it in the day time, he avoids the danger of being overfet, and all those sort of accidental staggerings.

Happy are we to say that, that determined, to verify the old proverb, our hero took the wisest way, and arrived in safety at Portsmouth; but we are afraid, it is a happiness in which few will join us.

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To the Jew's house he instantly repaired, and there, in the most violent terms, upbraided him with his baseness.—Moses, however, having accomplished his purpose, received all the bluster with a calmness that did honour to his humility, and while our hero stormed, the Jew grinned. Every opprobrious epithet that memory could suggest, was uttered with all the eloquence Mr. Price was in possession of. The brothers be-rascaled each other till they were hoarse, and our hero was, with regret we mention it, kicked out of doors, which kick was accompanied with a trifling curse.—It was not the *Anathema Maranatha* of the Greeks, but of the Israelites, equally expressive, and equally operative. It was the

Kawya Adonoiah,

which by *learned* Jews and Rabbi's, is thus translated:

THE BLAST OF THE LORD GOD JEHOVAH

ATTEND THEE!

We do not pretend to say the old cloaths man was a prophet, but this we may venture to affirm, that the imprecation stuck to our hero ever after, as close as a perpetual cantharidean blister.

With

With the reader's leave, we will pause and reflect a little. Our hero was now about twenty-five years of age.—He had been a barker in Monmouth-Street, a hatter and hosier in St. James's-Street, a clerk to a city merchant, who dealt in numerous foreign articles,—he had been in the same situation with the diamond merchant in Holland ; and, lastly, clerk in his Majesty's small beer brewery, at Weovil, in Hampshire. Thus, at the age of twenty-five, he was conversant in as many branches of business as he was years old ; and this, at a time when other young men, not quite so curious, are just fit to set up for themselves, confined to the narrow knowledge of one single species of merchandize.

We think ourselves bound to take every opportunity of recording every thing that tells to his advantage ; and therefore we must not omit mentioning, that his last master was the only one whose peace of mind he did not sacrifice, and whose property he did not plunder. Tho' such conduct is a little extraordinary, yet as it might have proceeded from self-interest, as well as from a transient principle of reformation, (we will not suppose it was the effect of his

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fear,)

fear,) therefore, without attempting to discuss it, we shall leave the reader to determine the question.—

It is not, however, unreasonable to suggest, that a genius of our hero's sagacity should consider, that there were some little advantages he had already taken of mankind, which had subjected him to the clutches of Father Antic, the Law; and that keeping upon good terms with the old gentleman was equally beneficial, whilst it was more conducive to his safety.

The reader must consider this as a sort of exordium to the ensuing farce, taking along with him in his mind, and which, once for all, we desire him never to lose sight of, our hero's ambition. Having till this time served others for himself, he now determined to serve himself, by pretending to serve others. From the situation of a servant, he now resolved to commence master, and exhibit his proficiencies in a higher sphere of life, which the following scheme literally accomplished.

It was about the year 1755, and in a few months after he had quitted Weövil, that he advertised nearly as follows :

W A N T E D,

“ A partner of character, probity, and extensive acquaintance, upon a plan permanent and productive : Fifty per cent. without risk, may be obtained.—It is not necessary he should have any knowledge of the business, which the advertiser possesses in its fullest extent ; but he must possess a capital of between 500 and 1000 pounds to purchase materials, with which, and the knowledge of the advertiser, a large fortune must be made in a very short time.—Address to P. C. Cardigan-Head, Charing-Cross.

“ N. B. None but principals, and those of liberal ideas, will be treated with.”

The reader must see, and with very little speculation, that this advertisement related to a brewing scheme ; but we fancy his penetration will be put to the stretch to find out whose notice it attracted.—Without further circumlocution, it

no less a personage than the late *Samuel Foote*, Esq. who having read the advertisement, and having at that time a superfluous charge adequate to the sum required, in one of his thoughtless moments, gave an answer to it.

It was this visionary scheme that introduced our hero to that really great man, and, when the explanation took place, Mr. Foote saw, or thought he saw, such a prospect of wealth before him, as the stage could never afford.—He therefore embraced the proposal, and was as pleased with the project as he was with the abilities and seeming honesty of his partner.

But though less eccentric gentlemen than Mr. Foote might have been more wary of their cash, yet we would have defied them to have been more circumspect, in this instance, in guarding against being gudgeon'd. — He demanded to know what risk his partner had to run, and whether abilities in brewery were the only pledges he was to have for sinking his capital? To this our hero replied, that he had a brew-house of his own, near King John's Square, in the Grange Road, Southwark, which he should
risk

risk in the experiment, and would produce the deeds at any time Mr. Foote should appoint for that purpose.

The day being accordingly appointed, our hero's invention was put to the rack, in order to accomplish what he had so readily proposed, viz. the production of the deeds of a brewery; for, in truth and in fact, he was neither in possession of the one or the other. True it is, he had cast his eye on one, and that was a sufficient motive for him to obtain the nine points of the law, possession.

To complete this title, he applied to the owner of the above brewery, and held out to him the advantages which must flow from such a scheme, and such an alliance.—The only difficulty that could arise from such a scheme was, he said, to convince Mr. Foote that the brew-house was the property of him; which, he told the owner, if he would make a short assignment of the deeds to him, in order to produce them to that gentleman, he, the owner, should have the sum of 200 l. extraordinary, as soon as ever the profits

profits of the business yielded that sum to his, Mr. Price's, share.

We would not have the reader be at all surprized at the weakness of the gentleman, to whom this scheme was proposed, in making such an assignment, as far greater instances will be adduced of them in the course of our history; which will shew, they were the whetstones on which our hero sharpened, and polished his instruments of deception to a most beautiful colour, and a very fine edge. The fact is, the owner of the premises did execute the assignment, it was produced at the appointed meeting, and the partnership was instantly commenced.

On this occasion there was a dinner given, at which were present many great men who were not wits, and many wits who were not great men; among the rest were the late S. F. B. Delaval, and the present Mr. Murphy. The gentleman who favoured us with these particulars was present himself, and we assure the reader we have no greater authority for the assertion.

Having

Having mentioned who were at this dinner, it may not be unpleasing to add, that the company, among others, had a curious kind of dish, viz. beef-steaks broiled in the *stoke-hole*.—It was proposed by a *wit*, and acceded to by all that were present, being *tout a fait nouvelle*.

On this occasion, Mr. Foote, as president, set the whole table on a roar.—Mirth, wit, and claret, flowed plentifully, and with them the glee and merry catch circled round.—The wits and the great men laughed at one another, and our hero laughed at them all.

We are here naturally reminded of a circumstance, that happened once at our *Alma Mater Oxoniensis*. Two Jews, assuming the characters of Rabbies, and pretending to be very learned in the Talmud, paid a visit to that university.—To each of the heads of the colleges they presented a cheese which bore some Hebrew characters, and which they affirmed they had bought at, and brought with them from the Holy Land. The Regius Professor of Hebrew also came in for the same compliment.—For this reverend present they obtained great courtesy, and had not ex-
acted

acted an inconsiderable emolument for them, when a Dutch Jew happening to arrive there, discovered them to have been his mother's own identical made cheeses, churned and pressed at Amsterdam, and on which were imprinted his own father's name. The Rabbies therefore speedily decamped, and the then Professor of moral philosophy wisely observed,—*That a chimney-sweeper's boy could always make a fool of every doctor in the university.*

To resume. Could Mr. Price have entertained an idea of that thread-bare virtue called honesty, he had now a very fair chance of making a very capital fortune by it. But as he chose to carry every thing with a *coup de main*, so he was too impetuous to wait the regular approaches of that goddess whom he daily addressed.—The small beer brewery went on with rapid success in the sale, but the payments came in very limpingly.—We have heard Mr. Foote more than once observe, that every body drank his beer, but nobody paid him for it.—Whilst he was plundered by his partner, who was his great and secret enemy, he was cheated by his customers, who were his great and open friends ;

so that it is no wonder, between Scylla and Charybdis, he split.

Things were going on in this situation, that is to say, a vast draught of beer, and the post-ing-book full of honourable and right honourable debtors, when a gentleman of character and fortune in the brewery line waited on Mr. Foote, and assured him, that he was a dupe to the designs of a very deep fellow, whose sole view was to cheat him out of every farthing he had ;—that he had no knowledge at all in the art of brewing, and that he was connected with a man of of, (we must, however unwillingly, let the word escape us) very infamous principles.

There are men in the world, who, having set their fancy on an object, cannot see the danger in endeavouring to attain it ; and who, if you advise them of that danger, turn a deaf ear to every thing that would divert the pursuit. In this instance, Mr. Foote was one of those species, and whatever the gentleman could urge to open his eyes to understanding, the more it convinced him of the certainty of success in his scheme.—When, therefore, he found every argument unavailing, he closed his advice with this proposal,
that

that if he would drop his present partner, and take him, in the stead of Mr. Price, a thousand guineas were at Mr. Foote's service, and he would, besides, advance him every farthing he had laid out in the expenditure of brewing materials.

The reader, if he knows any thing of mercantile affairs, will not be surprized at this offer. In business, a good name is better than riches; and a banker, in the neighbourhood of Temple Bar, when he retired from it, received 3000l. with security to the amount of 100,000l. to let his name stand to the house.

Two motives, however, operated so powerfully on Mr. Foote, as to prevent his acquiescence to the above proposal.—The first was, liberality of sentiment. He would not turn his back on a man whom he had a very good opinion of, and whom he had no reason to suspect of a bad intention.—The second was, his partner stood high in the opinion of his customers, and they all praised the beer exceedingly. We may safely venture, however, to say, that the principal reason of their praise was, the long credit they obtained; and that as they
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in general, never paid for it at all, all that the beer cost them was their praise—so that whilst he was creditor for large accounts, he was a considerable debtor on the score of adulation.

Upwards of a year had elapsed in this whimsical experiment, when experience taught Mr. Foote to repent his rejection of the above offer. —The credit given to Mr. Foote's noble customers, on the one hand, and the pilferings of his partner, on the other, daily reduced the stock, and swallowed up more than the former, who paid for every thing, could supply. Before two years had expired, our hero took advantage of the storm that was brewing, and decamped, leaving Mr. Foote to repent his credulity, who miraculously escaped a jail from the generosity of the maltster, hop merchant, &c. &c. to whom he gave up the whole, and who were satisfied in the integrity of his intentions. —Some very few of the debts were recovered, but the major part were totally lost. In this scheme Mr. Foote sacrificed upwards of 500*l*. the only satisfaction which he ever had for it, being the following reply, he once made to our hero, who with a modesty, peculiar only to great

great men, applied to him once afterwards, and offered to make him restoration, if he would become a partner with him in baking of cheap bread —“ *As you brewed, said the wit, so you may bake, but I'll be d-d if ever you bake as you brewed.*”

Another little anecdote of Mr. Price, we must let the reader be acquainted with, and it would be greatly injuring his character not to record it.

We mentioned his little device in obtaining of the landlord the assignment of the premises, but as Mr. Price was well skilled in the art of making a little go a great way; so, though the device was but a little one, he made it extend to a considerable advantage. Before his decampment he mortgaged the premises for 250l. and the owner was never able to recover them afterwards.

An observation naturally arises here. A gentleman of great learning and genius, which Mr. Foote confessedly was, can never be an equal match for low cunning.—The former never suspects what the latter is always plotting,
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knavish designs; nor can a man, who has not been used to the lower order of people, entertain an idea of that cunning, which is the constant appendage to a low mind.—Mr. Foote did not suspect, because he was honest himself, and our hero could not be honest, although he was not suspected.

After he had taken the aforesaid little advantage, our hero found it absolutely necessary to retire from the great world, which he had lately entered into with such high esteem, and from which he made his exit with so singular a proof of his genius. This retirement was a species of *skulking*, which many great men stile, living at a coffee house, and till their bills are too long for them to live there any longer.

It was in this way that our hero retired—He shifted from coffee-house to house, and from inn to inn, a considerable while; not, indeed, but he paid his debts contracted there, but it served him for the purpose of secreting himself incog. from various inquirers, to whom, although a man may be denied daily, yet they are not sensible of the insult, nevertheless, they are sure

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that

that the person so denied, has given strict orders to his servants, to say their master is not at home. These enquirers also, will daily attend till they do see you, and when they have paid the kind visit, will invite you to their houses, notwithstanding the utmost intreaties to the contrary; nay, so generous are they, that they will keep you for days and weeks, and, at last, see you safe *home*, that is to say, into one of his Majesty's jails, provided no kind friend will conduct you to the place from whence you came.

It was from these kind visitors that Mr. Price had retired, and it was in this retirement too, that he, either in real poverty or affecting it greatly, (the latter of which we are the rather inclined to believe) when a lodger at the White Bear Inn, Piccadilly, sent to the gentleman, whom we mentioned before, as favouring us with these anecdotes, and borrowed his gold watch, which the gentleman could never recover of our hero again, or its value, even in the hour of his affluence.

When the storms naturally occasioned by the
above

above *failure* had a little blown over, Mr. Price, like a snake, that is never seen but in fair weather, began to crawl out of his hole again; and though he did not chuse to venture further than the mouth of it, where he could hiss and retreat at pleasure, yet he enjoyed the rays of the sun, as they occasionally shone forth, and darted back again whenever it had withdrawn its beams, or he saw the danger of an approach-storm.

We now find our hero attending the tabernacles of the methodists, and it was in one of those luxuriant basks he wriggled into the good graces of an elderly lady who resided at Chelsea. Our reader will see by the tale, that it was not with much impropriety we adopted the figurative allusion of the snake.—We hope, and sincerely hope, that we shall not introduce a simile improperly; and we must tell our reader, that our hero, now commencing methodist preacher, we could not think of such a character, without a serpent presenting itself to our senses.

It may be easily guessed why Mr. Price should so cast his skin.—The lady was a strict methodist; and he, who knew so well how to

become all things to all men,
 could as easily become a methodist preacher, as any other profession he had before, or ever after, followed.—If we might venture to give our opinion, it should be, that he was the man the most calculated for that character that ever we heard or read of, not even the inspired Whitfield excepted, such were his powers of dissimulation and abundant hypocrisy.

It was not from general reasoning that Aristophanes, in his excellent comedy of the Devil upon Two Sticks, quoted the expression used by the conqueror of the world,

*“ If I was not Alexander I should chuse to be
 “ Diogenes,*

in order to introduce,

*“ If I was not the devil I should chuse to be a
 “ methodist preacher ;”*

but from facts, and a thorough knowledge of their rogueries, under religious pretences.

The fact of our hero having turned methodist preacher was well known to him, and by no means decreased his asperity against the sect.

When

When, therefore, he wrote the above play, he certainly had a retrospect to Mr. Price's ingenuities, and they gave a poignancy to his animated satire.

From the best chronological account we can obtain, he continued in this service for about three quarters of a year, when he robbed that lady of near 3000 pounds, as well under pretence of distributing charities to the flock, as by inveigling himself into her heart as a husband. Thus he played a triple game. He robbed an old methodistical lady who wanted a young husband, he defrauded the society whose consciences he was in hourly care of, and he made a mockery of the Almighty by pretending to preach his holy word, when he had nothing but fraud and rapine in his heart.

We are now, gentle reader, obliged to introduce thee to a lady, who will, in all due time, add a dignity to this work, and immortalize the page of this little history.—It is no less a personage than the celebrated Mrs. Poultney, whose address and ingenuity, under our hero's directions, have, for several years past, attracted

the attention, and defied the vigilance of the Directors of the Bank of England, the magistrates of the Police in Bow-street, and all the attendants on these two powerful bodies of men; a *full and particular account* of which, in proper time and place, we shall present to those readers, who are curious enough to know the celebrated exploits of two such extraordinary characters as Mrs. Poultney and Mr. Price.

History is something in the dark relative to the place where, the time when, and the manner how this precious pair got acquainted.—It was certainly either about the period of our hero's *vagabondizing* from inn to inn, or else when he taught lessons of morality to the old lady before-mentioned in character of a methodist preacher, which was in the year 1756.

Should we insert in this history what we have heard, we might be induced to draw very strange conclusions, no ways advantageous to the character of so complete a lady as Mrs. Poultney.—Before, therefore, we aim a blow at her delicacy, we ought to be well warranted in our assertion, that it was this lady our hero
advertised

advertised in two capacities :—First, as wanting a husband ; and secondly, as introducing her to gentlemen, who advertised for wives, as a woman of fortune and family.

One thing, in justice to this lady, who must hereafter cut a very considerable figure in this history, we cannot omit.—She was a genteel, elegant, and beautiful woman ; and though now upwards of 50 years of age, retains a great portion of those qualifications, which accomplished her for so eminent a connoisseur in female endowments as our hero.

Though it may be very shrewdly suspected, that Mr. Price would spring every mine that could yield the least source of treasure, and that he would employ those, or any other female ornament, such as virtue, chastity, &c. &c. to his own emolument, so ingenious was he in the art of bartering when he could make any little advantage of it ; yet we will not venture to suppose the all-accomplished Mrs. Poultney capable of exposing her qualities to *market-ouverte*. FILLIES are, indeed, advertised in a strain of captivating eulogium ; their shape, make, flesh, and

and high blood, pompously praised, and all their
 paces highly commended ; but we cannot con-
 ceive Mrs. Poultney would suffer such a compara-
 tive description of her figure to appear in a news-
 paper, as corresponded with a Filley as well as
 a female.—Pride, dignity, and sensibility, equally
 forbad it, and she is in possession of too much
 susceptibility to permit us even to conjecture so
 pitiful an opinion of her high qualities.

But, notwithstanding every conjecture is in
 favour of this lady, true it is, that there was a
 lady whom our hero played off in the stile we
 have alluded to, and of whose personal charms
 and mental accomplishments he did make a little
 advantage.—For, about the year 1757, an ad-
 vertisement, to the following purport, was put
 in the public papers.

To Gentlemen of CHARACTER, FORTUNE, and
HONOUR,

“ WHO wish to engage for life with a lady
 “ who possesses the above qualities in a very
 “ eminent degree. Her person, in point of
 “ elegance, gives precedence to none.—Her
 “ mind and manners are highly cultivated, her
 “ temper

" temper serene, mild, and affable, and her age
 " does not exceed twenty-two.—Any gentle-
 " man who answers the above address, may di-
 " rect a letter to A. Z. at the Bedford-Head,
 " Southampton-Street, Strand; and if their *mo-*
 " *rals* and situation in life are approved, they
 " will then be waited on by a person who will
 " procure the parties an interview."

How the idea of *morals* could creep into the
 head, of Mr. Price, may be unaccountable to
 many readers, as they probably have by this
 time conceived, greatly to his prejudice, that it
 was as distant from his heart as any two oppo-
 site points, whose remote ends are undiscover-
 able. Those, however, who know something
 of human nature, will not be surprized that our
 hero should extol that attraction in others which
 he never was in possession of himself.—They
 know also, that as nobody talks more about
 religion than those who have the least share of it,
 so nobody boasts more of honesty than those who
 are the greatest thieves. It was upon this prin-
 ciple, therefore, that he made *morals* a part of
 the requisite qualifications of a husband, well
 knowing, that if the applicant had any, it was
 the

the sure and certain ground on which he could with propriety fix his engines, the more securely to entrap his game.

The success of this scheme, we are informed, answered every purpose intended. It produced our hero a considerable sum in the situation of gentleman usher to the parties; and those were sure of having the introductory visit soonest paid, whose douceurs had the greatest weight. Various were the pretences to get rid of the visitants, but the chief ground of objection against most of the suitors was—their want of MORALS.—The five guinea gentlemen were soon dismissed with a *conge d'elire* elsewhere, but if the douceur was in any degree adequate to the beauty and fortune of the lady, and there was no ground of rejection on any other score, the want of *morals* was a certain incapacitation for the suitor.

It would be an ill compliment paid to our readers, not to suppose that they see through the reason why every gentleman, who was wise enough to answer the before-mentioned advertisement, was sure of a dismissal.—Had matters been carried farther, by an approbation of
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any one man, the production of certain writings would have been required, and men of real fortune must have been convinced, that there were either landed estates, or securities for money in the public funds. Neither of these, however, being the case, our hero confined his plan to the bare interview, for which, as soon as he had been tipped the customary sop, there was an end of all intercourse between the parties.

At this period of time, we are informed, our hero and the lady, whomsoever she was, (for we cannot imagine it to have been Mrs. Poulteney) resided in Red-Lion-Street, Clerkenwell; and, the better to carry on the business, had elegant lodgings in Charles-Street, St. James's-Square, where she was occasionally and as frequently visited as the Irish giantess, who was capable of concealing a man of six feet high, standing upright, under her upper petticoat.

This scheme, however, like all other schemes, calculated to impose on the understanding, soon had its termination. But though the decline of Dupes, put a period to so ingenious a device, yet that device was to our hero, if we may be allowed
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the expression, like a good suit of cloaths grown greasy and shabby in the wearing, capable of being turned and put off to advantage.

Again. The search after the philosophers stone has been productive of many benefits to society, although every projector has hitherto failed. Our philosopher, who was perpetually trying experiments in the art of making gold, no longer prosecuted his studies on any one principle, than he found out an advantage of bringing his experiments to perfection in another discovery arising out of his original researches. These discoveries he as constantly adopted as fast as they arose, and declined every other as soon as ever he had made the most of it. Thus, though he never completed his project of finding the philosophers stones, yet he did not exhaust his substance in the search after it, but was sure to reap some advantage in each and all of his philosophic attempts. Happy would it have been for many ingenious philosophers could we say as much of them.—Physic and natural philosophy may be indebted to their labours, but less scientific persons generally reap the benefit of their abilities.

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To drop the allegory. From having invited gentlemen of character and fortune to embrace a wife, he took to answering advertisements for a wife, by people who pretended to be gentlemen of character and fortune.—He thereby, reversed his original plan; or, more properly speaking, it was a phoenix rising out of his own fire, from which he also reaped a very considerable emolument.

It happened, however, a little unlucky, that in the prosecution of this project, he got hold of a gentleman, who did not care a fig, whether the world knew he was a fool or not.—This kind of dread, which easy and bashful persons are eminently possessed of, had hitherto been our hero's great shield.—In this he had reposed an entire security; and, perhaps, it is a confidence to which many ingenious personages are indebted for that existence in society, which their great actions would otherwise, in all probability, to the great satisfaction of that society, have put them off from.

The above gentleman, who had advertised for a wife, and had been introduced by our hero to the celebrated lady before-mentioned, whose

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name

name was WIGMORE, had discovered, though a little too late, that he had been dealing with an *Avanturier*, and very rudely and impolitely called our hero—a SWINDLER.

We are sorry to say that such an opprobrious epithet was bestowed on Mr. Price, but though we will not allow the truth of it, yet we admit that it is true he was so reviled. Nay, as we are on the score of allowances, we must also acknowledge, that having obtained the sum of fifty-five guineas, under pretence of procuring the said gentleman a wife; and, not choosing to refund that sum, a principle of which he had constantly very little ideas, somewhere about the year 1760, a certain piece of parchment called an indictment, was presented to forty-eight honest men of the county of Middlesex, charging him with so unprincipled an act as a FRAUD.—It had likewise the effrontery to say,

“ That,” our hero, “ Charles Price, not
 “ minded or desirous of getting his livelihood by
 “ TRUTH and *honest labour*, but being a person
 “ of *evil name and fame*, and of *dishonest conversa-*
 “ *tion*, and going about and daily *devising* and in-
 “ *tending*

“ unjustly to *vex* and *impoverish* divers liege sub-
 “ jects of our lord the king within this realm,
 “ and them of their monies by *subtle stratagems* and
 “ *devices* to *cheat* and *defraud*, to support him in
 “ his *profligate way of life*, DID acquire and get to
 “ himself, and of and from the said T. Wigmore
 “ a large sum of money, to wit; the sum of fifty-
 “ seven pounds and fifteen shillings, of good
 “ and lawful monies of Great Britain, under
 “ *colour and pretence* of getting him, the said
 “ T. Wigmore, a WIFE, of large fortune.
 “ WHEREAS in *truth* and *fact*, he, the said
 “ Charles Price, had no such woman to dispose
 “ of, or was employed by any such woman,
 “ or was in any treaty, articles, compromise
 “ or agreement whatsoever with any such wo-
 “ man, but *craftily and subtilly devising and in-*
 “ *tending* him the said T. Wigmore then and
 “ there to *cheat* and *defraud* of the said sum of
 “ fifty-seven pounds and fifteen shillings of lawful
 “ monies of Great Britain; to the great da-
 “ mage, oppression and impoverishment of him
 “ the said T. Wigmore, and in contempt of
 “ our lord the King, and his laws, to the
 “ evil example of all others, and against the
 “ peace of our said lord the King, his crown

“ and dignity, and also against the statute in
 “ that case made and provided.”

Now, reader, was there ever a string of impudent lying calumnies, combined and legally put together against any great man whatsoever, that could be more false and atrocious than the above Bar Billingsgate showered down upon our hero? It is with great difficulty we suppress our resentment at these powers of law oratory, and it was in just detestation of such a slanderous accusation, filled with such foul language and opprobrious epithets, that the aforesaid forty-eight honest men of the county, kicked it out of the Grand Jury room, as nobody who had the fear of God before their eyes, or but who must have been moved and seduced by the instigation of the devil, could have come forward and supported on oath, a charge, at once so very gross in its foundation, so unfounded in fact, and so very impure in its language.

The incident, however, that led to such a libel, was as follows.

Among others who had visited our hero, in
 search

search of fortune, character, and honour, was the said *Mr. Wigmore*, who then lived in Sackville Street, Piccadilly. This young gentleman had just come from the University of Oxford, was near twenty years old, and at the death of a mother, was intitled to somewhere about 3000l. per annum.—But, as he was under the obligation of *waiting for dead folks shoes*, and considering that *whilst the grass grows, the steed starves*, he thought an application to the advertiser, would enable him to repair some little breaches he had made into the real income of his mother's jointure, and throw him into a state of independency on a woman who was so hard hearted as to allow him only the pitiful sum of 500l. per annum, for his maintenance and education.

For this purpose he applied to our hero, who, having sifted into his affairs, sermonized exceedingly on the barbarity of stingy mothers, and on the liberal allowances which young gentlemen ought to enjoy, to prevent their falling into temptations which might reflect disgrace on their birth and character.

We have just before said, that *Mr. Price* was well

well skilled in those lines of the face which denote an ignorance of the wickedness of mankind.—In other words, he could read by the eye of a man, whether he knew so much of the world as to deter others from an attack on his property or understanding ; and finding that our collegian's face was as open as his heart was sincere, rightly adjudged him to be a man of whom a little advantage might be taken *in his own way*. He therefore told him, that the lady was niece to a clergyman, who, sorry he confessed himself to say, was a little avaricious in his disposition ; but whose prejudice in favour of the sons of *Alma-Mater* was so strong, that he might venture to affirm, any gentleman coming from the University, would have a preference shewn him to all the rest of the suitors, and have all his authority exerted in his interest.

To this uncle, our hero promised to introduce the young gentleman as the next morning, but before they parted, he hoped that five guineas would not be too much for the introduction. The Oxonian, highly pleased with the prospect in view, slipped the stipulated sum into Mr. Price's hand, and departed in a transport that can be
felt

felt only by those who are, in contemplation, suddenly possessed of ease, affluence, and to be a beautiful wife.

The time appointed for this interview was the next morning at eleven o'clock ; but, an hour before the time, the gentleman received a letter from our hero, in which he apologized for not waiting on him in person, informing him, that the business had been communicated to the reverend uncle, who seemed highly pleased with the idea of having an university student for his nephew, and requested to see him at twelve o'clock the same day, at his apartments in Charles-Street, St. James's-Square, but to prepare himself with fifty guineas at least.

The hour of appointment soon arriving, Mr. Wigmore posted to the apartments, where he was received by an apparent elderly ecclesiastic, with a solemnity due to the awful occasion. The pretended uncle and the gay lover, were as grave as if the one had been actually a clergyman, and the other had never known or read of the words dissipation and extravagance. — The fortune, beauty, virtue, simplicity, and meekness of the niece, were extolled to the skies, and the expectations

tations of the student ran down, with as much contempt as an annuity broker would treat the life of the soundest man in the kingdom.—In short, after debasing the gentleman's propositions till his pride began to be a little alarmed, the clergyman, who, as well as Mr. Price, knew to what extent the catgut might be stretched before it would break, then took the other side of the question, by flattering the abilities, the person, the family and character of the suitor, with a warmth that sat his imagination afloat. When this was done, and expectation stood on tip-toe, the *question* was put, “Whether he had come prepared?”

There is a language that the most ignorant man on earth cannot misunderstand, and there is also a manner of conveying that language by certain actions, which dumb men even can answer as well as the best bred scholar at Oxford or Cambridge. When this clergyman, therefore, asked the Oxonian if he had come *prepared*, altho' Mr. Price's previous letter had informed him what answer *must* be given; yet, for fear of too much indelicacy upon such a subject, and to banish all apprehension that it might need an explanation,

planation, he accompanied the question with stretching forth his right hand, holding it open, and tickling his palm with the middle finger.

Had, therefore, our young student been deaf, and dumb, yet as he was not blind, he must have understood the clergyman, even if Mr. Price had not *prepared* him for a competent knowledge in the classics.—But the *words were no sooner suited to the action, and the action to the words*, than, by a kind of charm, the fifty guineas were conveyed into the said right reverend palm, and with as much dexterity from thence *into* the pocket of the parson, as ever Mr. George Barington, of light-fingered memory, conveyed a purse of fifty guineas *out* of it.

The principal business of the interview being over, the gentleman was appointed to meet the lady the next day at the same hour, and at the same place, but—alas, that day never arrived.—Neither Mr. Price or the clergyman were to be found, and, tho' we are sorry and almost ashamed to say it, yet, we must confess, had he met Mr. Price he must have seen the ecclesiastic, and had he met the ecclesiastic he must have seen Mr.

Price,

Price, for they were, *ipso facto*, one and the same worthy personage.

Mr. Wigmore, however, not fully satisfied with this treatment, happened to speak to a limb of the law on the subject.—And this limb, thinking if he could get the body of our hero into his possession, he might make a tolerable job of it, took a good deal of pains to rummage out his residence.—When this was effected, the lawyer plainly told Mr. Price he ought to make restitution; and Mr. Price as plainly told the lawyer, that he and his restitution might be d—d.

It was this answer, therefore, that produced the before-mentioned libel, and for which Mr. Price was obliged to refund the sum of twenty-five guineas to the honest lawyer, who had not then the least idea to whom the afore said five guineas had been given.—How he and Mr. Wigmore settled it, we cannot exactly state; but we are informed, that his bill for prosecuting such a wicked impostor as Charles Price, came to no less than twenty-three pounds ten shillings.—Mr. Wigmore, therefore, received the sum of two pounds fifteen shillings in monies back again, and fifty-five pounds in *wit* and *experience*.—This

was

was the ground why the said Grand Jury kicked out such a scroll of scurrility, and the reason why no person dared appear to support it.

As the foregoing little advantage he took of Mr. Wigmore, was the first we have been able to trace which he put in practice by a personification of two different characters, it made us a little more minute in the detail of it. Besides, it is something like a glass of wine and bitters to an Epicurean, which provokes the appetite, as it prepares the reader to relish those greater feats of dexterity, which prove our hero to have been a complete master of the art of rising in reputation.

To enumerate the various applications made by gentlemen in search of wives, by the different advertisements of a lady of *fortune*, and *character*, and *honour*, wanting a husband, or gentlemen answering the same description, wanting a wife, would be as much impossible as to say, how much Mr. Price extracted from the purses of the visitants, in the character of a divine uncle and gentleman usher. Let it suffice, that he continued the scheme till the bubble burst, and he could no longer continue it with safety.—

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The reader also may be assured, that Mr. Price would never think of striking out a new line of business, till he had exhausted his genius in the prosecution of the old one.

A baker in Bishopsgate-Street, however, whose name we do not know, parted with the same sum to Mr. Price, on the same conditions Mr. Wigmore had done.

An observation suggests itself here very naturally. Mr. Foote having been plundered of his property, in a prologue to one of his pieces has these two applicable lines :

*My Pegasus, that skimm'd the milky way,
Robb'd and deplum'd, now tugs a tedious dray.*

So there is every reason to imagine, that the genius, who

Caught the living manners as they rose,
struck out the under plot of his Commissary from the foregoing circumstance, when he made Mrs. Mechlin introduce an Oxford gentleman to a lady, as intended husband and wife, who, by way of poetical improvement, turned out to be mother and son. It is the more natural to suppose it, as the farce of our hero, and the comedy of Mr. Foote, were no great distance of time from each other in their coming out.

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With this observation we shall, for a short time, take leave of Mr. Price, of whom we can give no faithful account till about the year 1759; as he again chose to retire from the fatigues of a bustling world, and enjoy his repose *incog*.

The reader is not to suppose that his genius was exhausted because it lay *dormant*.—Those who have frequented that theatre of POLITICAL COMEDY, nick-named the Parliament-house, must have seen, that when GENIUS appeared most unobserving and somnolent, that at that very moment it was collecting the utmost force of its fires; that though lethargic it was wide awake, and though apparently exhausted, it rose with a renewed ardour superior to its pristine vigour.—They must also have seen, that GENIUS, when it appeared to be most overwhelmed, sprang with redoubled activity, by the force of the very powers that endeavoured to annihilate it—that its sources were inexhaustible, and that no human sagacity or invention could prescribe its boundaries. Those who have been in the habit of attending that species of the drama will know where to apply the observation. The only objection, however, that can be made, is

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to

the title we have given to that heterogeneous assembly; because an entertainment of a very opposite nature to that of a COMEDY is often acted there. Our defence is, notwithstanding, at hand, ready to support the appellation.—A Frenchman calls the play-house *la comedie*, and when he goes there, will very gravely tell you, He is going to the *comedie* to see a *tragedie*! With all due deference, therefore, to Johnson's dictionary, when we stile our senate-house a theatre of political comedy, it includes a theatre of political tragedy, and so *vice versa*.

Again.—Although the reader should not have seen this grand national stage, he may perhaps have visited a neighbouring place of entertainment, equally polite and equally noisy.—We mean the Royal Cockpit.—There he must have seen the strutting heroes, pecking, cutting, and ripping each other, to the great delight, satisfaction, and profit of much greater cowards than the combatants, till the spirit and strength of one has been exhausted; when, with all timely cunning, he has thrust his head under the wing of his antagonist, till having gained breath, he has renewed the attack with a vigour superior
to

to his first fury.—The heroes of these two places of entertainment, therefore, may justly be stiled *game cocks*, as their modes of attack and defence are upon one and the same principle—equally trimmed, equally armed, alternately victorious, and alternately subdued.—There is one little difference indeed—The heroes produced at the Cockpit Royal are generally game, stand their ground, and fight till they die; whereas those who crow on the other stage are in proportion as eighty to one hundred *run away cocks*.

It was in this kind of way our hero took breath, and rose to a degree of dignity that we hope no parliament man will ever arrive to, the pillory excepted, and it was by this way we originally proposed giving our readers a little.—We intended, at the commencement of this history, to have divided it into so many books, to have sub-divided those books into so many chapters, and to have sub-sub-divided those chapters by so many occasional digressions; but as we wished to give a great deal of our hero, and very little of ourselves, we suppressed the intention. Besides, we did not wish to delay the curiosity of our readers, nor to

make ourselves great at the expence of making our hero little, and therefore studiously confined ourselves to facts.

From what has been already said, the reader will be enabled to judge of the capability of his head, and discover the tinge of a heart, which never were at rest without levelling their attacks on the friend and stranger indiscriminately.— Sorry, indeed, are we to own, that we are afraid, before this work is finished, it must appear, that Mr. Price was a person in whom the genius, the abilities, and the talents of all great men were combined. To speak plain, a man in whom the villainies of all mankind concentrated.

To return to our history. By the assistance of a gentleman, who is a very capital brewer in the neighbourhood of Pimlico, a man of integrity and respect, who had too much honesty to suspect another man of being a rogue, who was afterwards a principal creditor of our hero's a very considerable sufferer by him, and an eye witness, we are enabled to lay before our readers a few scenes of his future life, which by no means

means disparage any of the preceding part of these memoirs.

In the year 1759, and about the 29th year of his age, we again get sight of Mr. Price, in the capacity of a clerk to Mr. Stables, a brewer, in Wild-Street, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields. It was in this situation he first contracted an intimacy with Mr. W. the gentleman before alluded to, who then was Cooper to the said brewery, and who was then about five years younger than our hero. Mr. W. had been used, during his school days, to be pretty well secluded, by his parents, from the society of those young gentlemen, who were not well known to be attached to certain qualities which Mr. Price would have scorned to have carried into practice, if even he had been in possession of them.—During Mr. W.'s apprenticeship, the same line of conduct had been observed by his master which had been set him by Mr. W.'s parents. The leisure hours were filled up with improvements of a different cast from those which distinguish our hero in his juvenile days. When Mr. W. therefore, came out into the world, though he was not possessed of those endowments, which spring from that

flamina, which is denominated *sharpness*, so early inculcated in children by some parents, whose blossoms are, lying, impudence, and thieving, and whose end is to drop like over-ripe fruit from a tree; yet Mr. W. was master of certain ingredients which form a part of the human composition, and are termed sincerity, integrity, and confidence between man and man. He had some ideas also of that antiquated ragged virtue called honesty; and therefore was a very fit companion for Mr. Price, who could gain nothing by the man that was as *sharp* as himself, that is to say, a person who was unacquainted with sincerity, integrity, confidence, and honesty.

As we have not heard of any little foible or advantage he took of Mr. Stables, during the time of his clerkship, we do not chuse to enrich his brows with any laurels which his abilities may not have acquired him.—It is our duty only to preserve those he gained by his great art and industry in the science of mankind, and therefore, with the reader's leave, we will set Mr Price down as a master brewer once more, but
now

now solely for himself, in Green-Street, Grosvenor-Square.

How he got into that situation is easily to be guessed.—He was so perfect a master of the art of insinuation, and he cultivated the good opinion of Mr. W. with such perfect skill and address, that his heart was as open to our hero as his purse ; nay, he actually thought Mr. Price as good and as honest a man as himself.—Mr. Price, therefore, had no sooner proposed setting up in the brewery, than the proposal was closed with by Mr. W. who advanced the *one thing needful*. Nor should the reader be at all surprised at this.—He was convinced of the brewing abilities of Mr. Price, and he had a very high opinion of our hero's virtues.—In fact, Mr. W. looked on him as *one of the best men in the world*, which is a character often applied to the very worst men in the world.—Whether this was the present case will be seen before the time, perhaps, of this history being closed.—Added to the above, Mr. W. was to be Cooper to the brewery ; and this was a worldly inducement to assist Mr. Price, which men, who knew that world

world a great deal better than Mr. W. did at the time, might readily have acquiesced in.

There was also another reason why Mr. W. was induced to advance his money. He had been bred up with the fear of God before his eyes, and those hours which other young men generally sacrifice to idleness, pleasure, and dissipation, he frequently devoted to the service of his Saviour.—From this mode of managing his time, whilst he imbibed the seeds of morality, he rivetted the principles of his religion.—Now our hero, the reader knows, had been a methodist preacher, which Mr. W. did not know, and therefore, it is not much to be wondered at, that whilst the one was initiated into a true and sincere devotion, the other was a proficient in dissimulation and hypocrisy. It was also very excusable in Mr. W. not to discover it, when the first scholar, the first wit of the age, and who knew the world much better than Mr. W. could be supposed to have known it, never discerned it till it was, unluckily for him, too late.

It was upon this religious string our hero played one part of his overture.—He accompanied

nied Mr. W. to church as readily as he would have done to a tabernacle, and he would have been equally at Mr. W—'s service, had his religion been any, or all that were ever professed from the days of Melchisedec down to the present professor of divinity, the Rev. Mr. Rowland Hill, who like a phoenix has sprung out of the ashes of that grand arch apostle Mr. George Whitfield.

This reminds us of what the aforesaid scholar and wit said of a certain *departed* priest, in the character of Dr. Simony, as applicable to Mr. Price :——

“ He was none of your nice squeamish stomachs — swallowed the whole thirty-nine —
 “ and so he would — had they been thirty-nine
 “ times as many.”

With the cash and the confidence, therefore, of Mr. W— Mr. Price sat up his brewery, and, as is usual on such occasions, obtained a considerable credit, for an inconsiderable sum of ready money, with different tradesmen in that line of business.

It

It is worthy observation, that, during this intimacy, Mr. Price closely applied himself to the profession, and hardly ever stirred out to enjoy that ease and innocent amusement, which equally diligent, and equally honest men now and then indulge themselves with. Mr. W— often pressed Mr. Price to accompany him on a day which tradesmen, young and old, enjoy, as the only day, in some rational recreation.—It was with difficulty, however, this pleasure could be obtained, and his company to the generality of mankind, certainly was a pleasure.—He could discourse on any subject with a seeming, without a real knowledge, and was a man of penetration and wisdom to all but real philosophers ; to whom he was very conspicuous to have been master only of a whipt-syllabub kind of understanding.

Whenever the honour of his company was obtained, a retired walk was always our hero's choice, and the private road to Kilburn Wells, over the fields, was his favourite one.—He pretended to love contemplation, to admire the beauties of nature, and to adore the Author of the Universe in solitary walks.—Nay, his contemplations, his admirations, his adorations, were so profound, that if a passenger passed

passed by, it was as much as he possibly could do to throw one glance of his eye at him.—This is the certain characteristic of a great man.—He was a stranger also, during these *reveries*, to that impudent stare which puts modesty to the blush, and is displayed, in polite assemblies, with all the insolence of elegant effrontery, nor could anything induce him to look a man full in the face. He also despised that inquisitive skim, which is so very observable in two strange females when they meet, who read each other from head to foot, and who, having leered up and down a considerable while, set their eyes backs and noses at each other with all the warlike contempt of two strange cats in a garret.

The reader can scarcely be at a loss for a reason for this our hero's excess of modesty.—Monmouth-Street, St. James's-Street, the City, Holland, the Brewery at Weovil, with that of the Grange-Road, the Tabernacle in Totten-ham-Court-Road, the character of Gentleman Usher, and the part of the Old Parson to the Lady of Fortune, &c. &c. &c. might have furnished an opportunity, for an inquisitive passenger, to have recognized a person to whom our hero was not very desirous to have been known in the company

pany of Mr. W—. This part of his conduct naturally reminds us of the part he played in the character of the celebrated PATCH, when he artfully placed every servant on the left side where the patch was fixed, so that he could take an oblique look at every person with the right eye, and yet his face by no means discernable.—But of this in due time.

And yet, with all these absences, in spite of all these reveries, the passenger, if he chanced to look, was no sooner gone by, than he was most exceedingly inquisitive if Mr. W. was acquainted with him ; for, added our hero, I thought he stared at *you*, as if he had *known* you. Let the reader reflect here a little.—Let him remember, that

The thief doth fear each bush an officer.

He will then see, how miserable the man must be who lives in daily dread of detection, and who, though his thoughts are dead to every principle of virtue, yet his conscience is alive to all the horrors of complicated vice.

To return. The brewery continued till the creditors grew clamorous, and at last, which was something

something short of three years, a *failure* succeeded, Mr. W—— was a sufferer for upwards of 2000*l.* for which indeed he had a *Judgment*, but not one creditor got a farthing.

It must be remarked, that during this period, Mr. W—— used frequently to receive anonymous letters, advising him to be exceedingly cautious in taking securities of Mr. Price, for the money Mr. W——, from time to time, advanced him. These letters were in different hand writings, and whenever they were delivered, which was sometimes by a boy, sometimes by a porter, and sometimes by a chairman, Mr. W—— found, they were sent by different people; it was often by a young man, often by an old man, and often by a lady. Who this young man, this old man, and this lady were, may be tolerable well guessed. Mrs. Poultney certainly lived with Mr. Price at the time, but we could not wish the reader to suspect her of joining in such a treacherous kind of conduct— We call it treacherous, because the very same letters, advising Mr. W—— to take good securities for his money, represented Mr. Price as a very honest worthy man, and one who

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might be safely trusted with money to any amount. By these letters, therefore, the Judgment before-mentioned is accounted for, and it proves further, that in every transaction of our hero's life, all his measures were supported by schemes, and that every scheme was productive of additional plunder.

But what reflected a splendor on his character most, was, that in this failure he preserved the opinion of his creditors, as an honest, industrious, and ingenious man. Industrious he assuredly was—Ingenious he must be allowed, but in what his industry and ingenuity consisted, required not half the difficulty to fathom, as it would to discover in what way his honesty was so very conspicuous.

After this second failure, Mr. Price lived like a private gentleman for some time, till about the latter end of the year 1762, when we find him again a brewer in Gray's Inn Lane, master of those premises called the Boar's Head Brew-house. This he was enabled to be, by the assistance of friends, credit, and some part of that property which he judged would have been very
ridiculous

ridiculous to have consigned to the care of those creditors whom he left in Green Street, Grosvenor Square.

During his management of this brewery a circumstance happened, though a little foreign to the main design of this history, yet the curious reader may not think unacceptable. Mr. Price succeeded one Stowe in that brewery, who failed. Mr. Stowe's brother, who then lived in Soho-Square, and was either sheriff of Nottingham, or Northampton, we are not quite certain which, was security for the brewer.—A commission of bankruptcy was issued, and he was sent for to be examined by the commissioners. After the examination, finding himself liable to pay the debts of his brother, and by that payment he must become a beggar, he retired to his house in Soho Square, and not having resolution enough to stand the shock of his brother's and his own misfortunes, manfully blew out his own brains.—We mention this by way of anecdote; at the same time, desirous of clearing Mr. Price of all unjust suspicions, and to rescue his character from the ingenuity of brother historians, we must do that gentleman

the justice to say, he was not at all concerned in, or privy to, *this* murder.

But the means by which he got into the Boar's Head Brewhouse, being more immediately related to our main design, viz. the life and transactions of this great man, we must not let slip a circumstance, which redounds very much to perpetuate our hero's character to remotest generations.

By the bankruptcy of Mr. Stowe, there was a vacancy in the said brewhouse, and a Captain Wise, who lived at Milbank, Westminster, and had been in the Jamaica and West-India trade, by which he had accumulated a considerable fortune, was the assignee to Mr. Stowe. Our hero having fixed his eye on this brewhouse, and his head on the aforesaid Captain Wise, whose acquaintance he obtained, not by public advertisement, as he had done that of Mr. Foote's, but by personal private application he was determined to get master of that, by means not very distant from those by which he obtained possession of the brewery in the Grange Road.

His

His manner of address to Captain Wise being in that captivating state which made most men, who did not thoroughly know him, his admirers, the latter was engaged to enquire into his character, and the gentleman to whom our hero referred was Mr. W—. Captain Wise, therefore, waited on Mr. W—, from whom he obtained this character, that he was very capable in the business, very active, industrious, and he believed a very honest man.

On this recommendation, and what was said of Mr. Price, which did not weigh half so much as what Price said of himself, Captain Wise was induced to let him the premises.

He had not been long in this brewery before he had so safely *wormed* himself into the good opinion of Captain Wise, that our hero proposed a plan of serving the West-India Islands with beer, if Captain Wise would advance him the sum of two thousand pounds on the project.

There is a method of extracting money even out of the hands of a miser, and, if it laid in the power of any man, our hero was in full possession.

sion of the secret.—His scheme with Captain Wise was consonant to that regular system by which he regulated all his attacks.—He conformed himself to all things, all tempers, stations, and dispositions; nor was there an existing character he did not comply with whenever he had once fixed his attention on the property of that individual.—In fine, as he knew the weak side of every man, he attacked him on that side, and his engines were so well set, that the game could never escape.—The project of sending beer to the West-India Islands was in Captain Wise's way, and therefore the more likely was Mr. Price to succeed in the proposal. But one step he always took in the accomplishment of every project: he never came boldly to the point till the business was three parts done to his hands; he knew the opinion of Capt. Wise on the subject, and therefore, like a hawk that watches every motion of its prey, he never made a dart at it till it was almost impossible for him to escape. It was in this way he picked up Captain Wise, and in this way he succeeded.—Mr. Price's arguments coincided with the opinion of Captain Wise, and Mr. Price had always an opinion to coincide with the Captain's argument.

ment.—No wonder, therefore, that he readily advanced the money upon the same kind of security that Mr. W— had advanced his, viz. a Bond and Judgment.

It was at this period of time he proposed to the aforesaid Mr. W—, a project for purchasing hops to the amount of 3000l.—To facilitate his plan, the proposal came to Mr. W— at a season when hops were reduced, but expected very soon to bear a very high price..

There is a moment when the wisest of all human beings may be outwitted ; and there is a moment when men, who do not even possess common understanding, cannot be over-reached. Mr. W— was neither of these characters, but a plain honest young man, with a tolerable share of common sense for his years. He had not had opportunities of forming a tolerable knowledge of the world, by which phrase we mean to be understood, possessing a competent knowledge of every species of knavery, and therefore made some kind of scruples to advance the money.—They were scruples, however, arising from considerations which he himself could not perfectly

perfectly explain at the time he made them, nor account from whence his hesitations arose, but he did scruple, and he did hesitate.—He thought Mr. Price a very clever and a very honest man, and yet he did not like to part with his property, although there was a very considerable apparent profit arising out of the plan.

WE, who perhaps know something more of mens motives for their own actions than they do themselves, and can trace the spring and source of their reasoning and determination still more accurately, are not at a loss to account for Mr. W— hesitating at Mr. Price's proposals. It is well known, that a third person, who understands piquet, sees and knows more of the game than the parties who are playing, and where they lay out, and whe they play to the best advantage.—It is no difficult matter, therefore, if the *major* be allowed, to grant the *minor*, and this in the old proverb of “*a burnt child dreads the fire.*”

It was on this principle Mr. W— acted, though he was not sensible of it himself.—It was an unaccountable something that made him hesitate,

state, though he did not absolutely decline advancing the money.—Had he not already suffered, he would have readily complied with the request, which his former conduct sufficiently shews; but the impulse of the fear of a second miscarriage determined him, although he did not doubt of Mr. Price's honesty.

This latter word leads us to make another comment on the transaction.—It is not very clear, but that Mr. W— had sometimes doubted about the strictness of that thread-bare virtue in our hero; and that there was a *je ne sçai quoi* on his mind, taking it all in all, that he could not translate into the clearest language; that is, he could not say Mr. Price was not an honest man, although he could not say he was not a rogue; else how shall we account for the following caution, which Mr. W— used on the occasion, and which we defy the first lawyer in the kingdom to exceed.—He offered to advance the money by drawing on his brother, who lived in the Borough, and was well known among the hop-factors, and that his brother should indorse it on the delivery of the hops, till
which

which indorsement the note was but a piece of waste paper.

Till this cautious proposal our hero had been all softness, affability, and argument with Mr. W—; but when he found that there was the least obstacle to his design, and that he could not manage Mr. W— just as he thought proper, he began to resent the injury.—He was, moreover, most exceedingly angry that Mr. W— dared to think for himself; and when he discovered, or thought he discovered, the least shadow of an imputation on his honour, he cocked his right eye, and bit the left side of his nether lip, thereby suppressing a sudden burst of passion, and at once collecting in his mind all the malice which bloated a certain gentleman when he found himself defeated in the garden of Eden.

As, however, he could not obtain the money, which was what he most earnestly pressed for, he refused the draft, which was proof, as plain as the sun in its meridian, that he meant to take the same little advantage of Mr. W— with the 3000l. as he had done with the 2000l. and that
having

having cajoled him out of the latter, he thought he had a right to rise in his demands, by adding an additional thousand to a sum equivalent to his first manœuvre.

As he did not entertain the least doubt but that he should succeed with Mr. W— in his application, so he did not apply to him till he had actually contracted for the hops, and this for the best of all possible reasons.—It gave a sanction to his request, and confirmed Mr. W— in the reality of his application; besides, it prepared him with an unquestionable answer to every enquiry that could be made, and enabled him to crow as a man of consequence, even without that assistance.

In the whole course of our hero's history, this is, perhaps, the only instance in which he plundered his friend under the disguise of perfect honesty, without securing his confidence the more he plundered him, such were his art and subtilty. Mr. W— lost two thousand pounds by him; and it is with pleasure we congratulate that gentleman, that he was not reduced by his *friend* to the very brink of beggary, which was
another

another unhappy person's case, more credulous than Mr. W—, and which the reader will be soon informed of.

But though the application to Mr. W— was for 2000l. and though Mr. Price failed in that, yet we would not wish our readers to conceive, that any measure of Mr. Price's proved totally abortive.—If he sowed as much golden grain which he supposed must bring up 2000l. worth, the land must have been very barren indeed that did not produce 200l. worth. Having contracted for the hops, he went into the country, and insisted upon the performance of the contract; but the hop merchants, who were by this time convinced of the reality of what our hero had only in speculation, viz. that there would be a considerable rise in the price of hops, began to open an accommodation with their arch-customer.—They proposed giving him the sum of two hundred pounds to be off the bargain, as they knew they should be great gainers if they could bring him into their scheme; and our hero, who knew he should be 200l. in pocket if he acceded to it, embraced the offer, and thus the hop merchants fell into his scheme, which was the real object

of

The person we alluded to just now was a maltster at Wandsworth, whose name the gentleman who informed us of these facts has forgot.—From him, Mr. Price squeezed more than the sum above-mentioned, which was the total ruin of him; for matters being now tolerably ripe, a third *failure* took place, and a commission of bankruptcy was issued against our

M hero.

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hero. The maltster, who was unfortunate enough to know Mr. Price, and to be thereby reduced to the humble situation of a journeyman grocer, lived to have the satisfaction of seeing his carcase thrown into the cross road, near to Tothil-Fields Bridewell, with a stake drove through that body, which in justice ought to have been consigned to the jaws of less voracious animals than himself.

6 | This commission of bankruptcy was, perhaps, of all others that ever did, or ever will happen, the most singular in its nature, and the richest for humour that ever came before any set of commissioners whatever.—It was in the mayoralty of Mr. Alderman Nelson, who was chosen assignee, and in the year 1776.

To this examination Mr. Foote was summoned, in order to prove a bond for 200l. which he had given to the bankrupt during their connection.—The object of the creditors was to make Mr. Foote a partner, the object of Mr. Foote was to steer clear of a partnership; for if a partnership had been once proved, this gentleman would have been liable to all the debts

debts contracted during the brewery between him and Mr. Price.

Our hero declared Mr. Foote was a partner. Mr. Foote denied it, and explained the bond to be given as a settlement of accounts between them when Mr. Price began his brewery. That he had lent him a certain sum of money to commence with, and that he was intitled to no more than five per cent. for his money, and a certain profit arising out of the brewery, in consideration of recommending him customers; and that in fact he was near a 1000l. out of pocket, which the bankrupt had robbed him of.

There is no doubt but Mr. Foote had his able lawyers to advise him in so critical and perilous a situation; for if the partnership had been proved, he would have been plunged into the most pitiable situation, that ever unsuspecting and eccentric genius was involved in.

On the other hand, Price as firmly asserted, that Mr. Foote was a partner; and if he could have proved it, would have redeemed himself from the greatest difficulties at the expence of

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Mr. Foote, whose friends, perhaps, would have released him from the attendant distress, if his own genius would not have rescued him out of it.

It was, therefore, a very hard run match between the two. Price, at this commission, assumed the orator : " Gentlemen," said he, " every word that this *commedian man* has told you is an untruth. The bond was given for money due to me, advanced on the slender security of three farces, which this player writer *was* to compose ; all of which, gentlemen, when composed, *were*—DAMNED. Gentlemen, this bond," holding it up between his two fingers and two thumbs, and lost in the profound profundity of his cogitative cogitations, " this bond, I say, gentlemen," here he tore the bond right down the middle, " by God I advanced every farthing of the money for, and when *we* broke, in order to avoid the visits of bumbailiffs, we ran away to Paris together.

As nothing could shock Mr. Foote more than a lie, and this we say of our own personal knowledge, so nothing affected him more than an impudent barefaced one to support a dishonest act.

Though

Though he was highly enraged at the daring insult, yet his reply,

“ By God, Sir, if you was partner with
 “ me in brewing, you shall not be partner
 “ with me in wit—Gentlemen, this horrid and
 “ detestable liar, having got that sum of money
 “ from me on the bond, and a great deal more,
 “ would have split me as he did the bond.—He
 “ offered to sell it to Belcher and Ironsides, the
 “ bankers, who applied to me about it, and
 “ who being satisfied it was mine, that fellow
 “ sold it to them, and I never saw a sixpence
 “ for it.”

The truth of this fully appearing to the commissioners, they could not well decide on the bond.—Our hero complained of their partiality to Mr. Foote, and told them, they were afraid of deciding against him, for fear of his mimicry.—“ And as for you, Sir,” said he, addressing himself to the Lord Mayor, “ if you
 “ don’t humour that comedian man, you’ll be
 “ dragged from the mansion to the Hay-market, notwithstanding you are Lord Mayor of
 “ London.”

In short, the commissioners sat from five in the afternoon till ten at night, when they broke up without doing any thing.—As they could not prove Mr. Foote's debts in the trade, they could not prove the partnership, and at the next examination, our great man was made a bankrupt, *solus cum sola*. Every thing was seized on and sold to the best advantage, and our hero, to avoid the general outcries and clamours of all who had known, or even heard of him, prudently decamped to the continent, which was in the year aforesaid, and when he was in the thirty-third year of his age.

From that period, Mr. Price continued his travels abroad, till about the year 1768, so that there is a cavity in the life of this great man, from the time of his bankruptcy, to the period of his return; which was two years, and in which, history can do no great honour to his memory.

Not that we would wish our readers to suppose, that during this period he was a drone in nature's hive—He knew too well how to profit by his labours, and to extract the sweets from exotics as well as natives, to let his talents lay unemployed,

unemployed, or his abilities uncultivated. Neither the great Linnæus, nor our learned Letfom, were more skilled in the vegetable, than our celebrated Charles Price was in the animal system.—Had his genius been confined to places as well as persons, we should have known nothing of him in Holland; nor could we have boasted his prosecution of his studies in the Emperor's palace on the continent, viz. the prison at Ostend.

How Mr. Price contrived to preserve the great reputation he had acquired, and to transplant his fame to Germany, the following little anecdote will serve to illustrate.

During his travels he had ingratiated himself into the good opinion of two gentlemen, who joined our hero in sentiments as laudable as they are public spirited.—One misfortune, indeed, often attends such sentiments, and that is, being exposed a common carcase on a gibbet; but then such heroes, whose blood glows with the *amor patriæ*, think such an exaltation the highest reward of their great merits, and suffer *pro*
bona

bono publico, with all the patriotic dignity of a Hampden, a Sidney, or a Ruffel.

Not to keep our readers much in suspense about what were the sentiments of this noble triumvirate, he must understand, that they considered all imposts raised on the subject, for the support of the dignity of the crown, and the honour and glory of the nation, as so many sanctified robberies, engendered by tyranny, and levied with long swords.—In plain English, they were persons, who, not having the least regard to the welfare of the state which protected them, or any care or concern for the interest or happiness of their fellow subjects, but biassed only by personal motives, had concerted a scheme, under the auspices of our great man, to enroll themselves in that list of heroes, to which we give the vulgar appellation of SMUGGLERS.

The branch of that truly noble and spirited principle, in which this triumvirate had determined to exercise their abilities, was, making Holland's gin, and the place where this laboratory was to be fixed was London. For this purpose,

purpose, Mr. Price had persuaded his two friends to accompany him to England, and embark in a business which must soon richly reward them for the benefits they bestowed on the revenue, and the services they conferred on the community, by vending a poisonous liquor free of excise.

Whether our hero was so much of a Lawyer as to know, that enticing artificers or manufacturers out of his own country, to emigrate into foreign parts, and communicate the *art* and *mystery* of their professions to the subjects of other potentates, was an offence within two different specific acts of Parliament; the one, the 5th of George I. chap. 27, sect. 1, which inflicts a fine of 50l. and three months imprisonment; and the other, the 23d. of George II. chap. 13, which doubles the punishment and increases the penalty to 500l. with imprisonment till paid, we know not. Or, if he *had* so much knowledge of the Laws of his own country, it may be suspected that he was of opinion such prohibitory laws for sacrificing the interests of the public, might not extend to *parts beyond the seas*; unless, indeed, we are to suppose that, though he was conversant

fant in the laws of nations, yet that he was, nevertheless, determined to set all laws, and all nations, whatever, at defiance, of which, perhaps, some readers may, by this time, begin to conceive.

Whatever might have been Mr. Price's knowledge on the subject, the fact is, he did *entice* the said two persons to accompany him to England. True it is, also, that by virtue of some suspicion, which in certain states is enough at all times to break a man alive upon a wheel, this triumvirate had a period put to their progress, by being cooped up in a prison at Ostend, till they could give that fair and just account of their *intentions*, which might induce the Emperor's representative to restore them to their liberty.

We are given to understand, that not more than six months had elapsed, when they were officially acquainted with the nature of their offence; and that three more slid away before the great officers of justice would condescend to hear any answer to the charge for which our hero was confined.—We are also informed,
that

that when they were suffered to defend themselves, Mr. Price was the attorney at law, who furnished an answer to the charge; and that to a long string of interrogatories, sent to the prison for them to subscribe their answers thereto, the defence of the said attorney was, "That so far from meaning or intending to *sacrifice* the interests of the state in which he resided, by taking manufacturers abroad, his sole view and object was to *benefit* that state, by encouraging them to go to England, for a certain time, and there to *improve* themselves in their profession, and then to return; by which they would be so improved, that instead of their travels being injurious, it would be highly serviceable to the Emperor's state and his subjects."

In the early part of the history of this great man, we have somewhere wondered, how his father could so far mistake his son's *forte*, as put him an apprentice to a tradesman, when, from the best intellectual evidence, he was qualified for a good barrister, or at least a special attorney at law. The answer he put into the said charge, leads us to lament, that his father paid no attention to those early indications of legal abilities,

abilities, and special pleadings, which so evidently displayed themselves in the above defence. We are the more induced to regret such inattention, because, from the above specimen, it is clear, that numbers of unhappy wretches, whose lives, to the great detriment of society, have been lost at Tyburn for want of good defences at the Old Bailey, might have been alive now to have read the catastrophe of a man, whose abilities soared infinitely higher than ever the celebrated eagles of Mr. Uncles could reach, and to which kind of defences they would have been indebted for that existence, which the laws of the land have so cruelly deprived them of.

It is well known in all criminal courts, that the great art of defending is *admitting* a charge, but *denying* the intention.—In this art Mr. Price seemed to have been an adept, and though the mode of proceedings differ in different countries, yet the construction of all actions in legislative states must determine the innocence or guilt of the party accused. From this construction arises the *intention*, by which every offence must be weighed. It is this principle, which in this country, wisely adjudges that man to be guilty of murder

murder, who fires at one person and kills another, for his *intention* was to *kill*; and though he did not kill the party he intended, yet his intention being to kill, such killing is deemed murder.—This principle also is refined, and applies to a man who kills another by throwing such a weight, or body, into a promiscuous croud, or on a passenger, as may occasion death; without intending to kill any body, or even without seeing that passenger, or that croud into which he so wantonly threw.—Nor would it be any defence for the murderer to say, “Good God! I knew not, I saw not that man, nor had I any animosity against him;” but having thrown such a weight in such a place, where crowds or passengers are supposed to pass, such killing is in the eye of the law murder, as the law will suppose an *intention*.

We beg pardon for the digression, which we hope will not be displeasing to young students of the crown law, or unserviceable to those gentlemen who, sometimes, delight in such acts of wantonness.

To return.—Mr. Price having made the best defence he could, viz. his good intention, and

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the magistrate having weighed it with mature deliberation for full three months, not being willing to give hasty judgment on such a nice point, sent our hero his pardon, on condition of transportation out of the Emperor's dominions during the term of his natural life.

It may, perhaps, be considered as a little extraordinary to some readers, that Mr. Price should remain a year in prison, and not be brought to a trial. But those readers are to consider, that the laws of no state whatever afford the party accused such infinite advantages as the laws of England.—In this country, a liberty is allowed to prisoners, and privileges permitted, which no subject in the whole world enjoys besides.—The charge before the magistrate is *viva voce*. The indictment before the grand jury *ex parte*, who may dismiss the charge, if they do not see sufficient grounds to put the prisoner on his defence; and the benefit of it our hero has already experienced.—His trial by his peers, the most inestimable blessing that the Great Disposer of Human Events has distributed throughout the globe in his legislative dispensations.—Judges of wisdom, learning, and integrity,

grity, to direct the proceedings, and even protect the prisoner from ignorance and malice.—The King and his council to weigh and decide upon the enormity of offences, the magnitude of guilt, and the proper objects of punishment.—And lastly, the executive power vested in Majesty, who is on oath to execute justice in mercy, with the power of punishing or pardoning whom he pleases, form a combination of systems to protect the life, liberty, and property of the subject, which is the envy of the universe, and the pride and glory of Englishmen.

To resume. Mr. Price having obtained his pardon, took leave of Ostend, and with as much pleasure as ever criminal quitted the bar of the Old Bailey, when the jury have *humanely* believed he had *found* the property which the prosecutor maliciously charged him to have stolen.

But though it is the usual practice in this country, for foreign emissaries, and their agents, to advance a considerable sum to the artificers they mean to inveigle abroad; yet Mr. Price thought that this general rule here was by no means to be considered as a precedent elsewhere.

—Instead, therefore, of giving *them* money in advance, he made them advance *him* little less than 300*l.* in consideration of the great benefits they were to reap from a distillery, which was to pay no part of that excise duty, and which so *unjustly* ran away with no inconsiderable part of the profits, perhaps no less than seventy-five per cent.

Although Mr. Price was *transported*, yet the two gentlemen who had joined him in the proposal, were confined to their own country by the order of that power which had confined them prisoners for a twelve-month.—This order they would chearfully have obeyed, as well as the most obedient slave in the universe, who cries, *une Dieu, une Roi*, could they have coaxed out of the pocket of Mr. Price near three hundred pounds as easily as he had cajoled that sum into it.

Not being able, however, to effect this, they laid a complaint to the civil power, before whom Mr. Price was taken, not summoned to appear.—He had then, the honour to be examined, face to face, by so great a man.—The *who*, the *what*, the *why*, and the *wherefore*, were gone through with

with the most profound gravity, and Mr. Price gave those answers which best suited his case; but with regard to the three hundred pounds, he declared it to be false, and that he never had had any more than fifty pounds of them, which, laying down on the table, he said, was very hard he should be obliged to refund, as he had suffered great hardships for their sakes, and meant to contribute every thing in his power to the commercial interests of the Emperor.

On the sight of the cash, the muscles of this rigid officer of justice began to relax a little, and sweeping it into his drawer, he said, he should take care of it himself, which we by no means doubt but he did.—He, however, dismissed our hero with a frown, and accompanied that frown with an expression that seemed to denote an abhorrence of taking such pecuniary advantages; for, on their parting, he exclaimed,

*En verite, Monsieur Charles Price, je crois
que vous etes un grand COQUIN !*

which, for the sake of some readers, and at which we hope others will not be offended, we beg leave to translate :

*Indeed, Mr. Charles Price, I believe you are
a very capital KNAVE.*

This dismissal reminds us of a conversation that once happened between a gentleman, whom we have already introduced into this history, and the *officer* or *commissaire*, whose business is to examine all visitors who take a trip to France by way of Calais.—We mean Mr. Foote.—He was once asked his name, and not relishing this French attack on his native English freedom, replied, *Jean Foote*, which being mistaken for *gent-fout*, put the *officer* into a plaguy passion, who considered the answer as an insult to his dignity. He therefore again enquired, and with an *hauteur officielle Francois*, *Je demande votre nom, Monsieur.*—Jean Foote, said our Aristophanes, with the most profound obeisance. — An English gentleman, who was present, seeing the great officer of justice likely to be in a rage, and apprehensive of the consequences to our wit, told the *officer*—*Monsf. cette gentilhomme est Monsf. Foote, le Commedienne Anglois.*—Ah, ah, said the judicial examiner, embracing him *a la Francois*—*Monsf. Foote, je suis bien aise a vous voir, mais, parblieu, cet une fouté nom*—and then the two wits drank each

each other's health in good bumpers of Burgundy, which we vouch was by no means unpalatable to the English bard, from whom we were favoured with the foregoing anecdote.

Whether the Ostend officer restored the fifty pounds to the artificers, history has not sufficiently informed us.—It only gives us to understand, that our hero, who knew the weak side of justice in all parts of the world, as well in the county of Middlesex as in the city and liberty of Westminster, hoisted his sail soon afterward, and arrived once more in his native country, which had been already under so many obligations to his ingenuity, that she would readily have spared the honour of the visit.

How he passed his time for some months here history likewise is a little in the dark ; but in or about, as the lawyers phrase it; the year 1769, she again catches a glimpse of him established in another brewery, or rather pretended brewery, in Paradise-Row, near Lambeth, in concert with his ever dear and precious mate, Mrs. Poultney. We are something at a loss too on the lady's account, for whether she accompanied her paramour

miour to the continent, during which stay he visited most of the courts in Europe, or whether he left her behind, history is a little in the dark ; but it makes us some little amends by now discovering to us, that her maiden name was CATHERINE HICKERINGILL ; that she was the daughter of a Mr. Hickeringill, whose other daughter was then married to a Mr. Wood, who was an eminent brewer in the Borough of Southwark, a very respectable man, and a worthy magistrate of the county of Surry, of whom we shall have a little occasion to speak hereafter.

The manner also in which Mr. Price got into this *fourth* brewery we are also enabled to lay before our readers, and is as follows :

With some property of his own, and more that he obtained upon credit from credulous persons, for there were still more to be found, he got possession of some premises in Paradise-Row, Lambeth, as aforesaid.—These premises, which had never before been used in the brewery line, he converted into that business ; and under pretence of *brewing*, he set up a private *distillery*.

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The ingenious Scrub says, *there is a secret in all families*, and we may venture to add, there is a secret in all trades. When premises are converted into a brewery, which had not previously been fitted up as such, it is almost a certain indication of an attempt to defraud the revenue.—For a brewery is a cloak to a private still, which cannot be carried on to any considerable extent, without some plausible pretext, and the best of all possible pretences is, a brewery.—Besides, those honest gentlemen, called Excisemen and Custom-house officers, who have as good noses as any pack of hounds, this or any other country can produce, can easily *sniff* a private still.—They have generally also, which is saying a very great thing, so much learning as to know, that *there is no smoke without fire*; and have also sagacity enough to conceive, that wherever there is a *fire*, there is certainly a *smoke*.—Of this peculiar sagacity, and of this high learning, those who are enemies to all the world but themselves, *i. e.* robbers of the public revenue, are very well aware; and they are aware likewise, that the said honest gentlemen are so stimulated by an excessive ardour for the *good of their country*, that they will often risk their lives if not *spoke*
with

with in a very *proper* and *genteel* manner.—They, therefore, with equal sagacity, carry on a private distillery, under a pretence of a public brewery, so that there is no danger to be apprehended arising from the *smoke*; which they take pretty good care to be so very thick, as not only to blind, but to stop up the nostrils of the above worthy fraternity, and thereby for a time, deprive them both of sight and smell.

From the *premises*, therefore, it may be fairly concluded, that as long as those said honest gentlemen can be deprived, in any manner whatever, of those two senses, so long the COALITION will last; and that their sight and smell are never restored, so long as they are *spoke to* in that *proper* and *genteel* manner.

Of this doctrine, Mr. Price was a most competent judge, and he made the most of it. He continued in that line of business, without let, hindrance, suit, molestation, disturbance, annoyance, or any other legal phrase, that may be adopted, to spin out the deed, whatever, till about the year 1771.

Sorry

Sorry we are, that we are not enabled to treat our readers with an account of any little advantage he might have taken of particular persons, during his practice in that *art* and *mystery*; they must content themselves, therefore, in the general account, and be satisfied with the history just as it is. 'Tis true, several people were sufferers, besides government, whom our hero thought, that instead of its being a crime, it was a merit to rob, as many other heroes have done, who at the same time scorned to rob Jack Ketch of *his duties*.

Upwards of two years having elapsed, and the before-mentioned officers beginning to recover the use of all their senses, a BANDITTI of RUFFIANS, as our hero expressed it, committed a burglary in his dwelling-house, having no other authority whatever, than a warrant from the commissioners of his Majesty's excise, which obliged him again to decamp, and never to be heard of for the space of near three years.

But we would not wish our readers to entertain so injurious an opinion of Mr. Price's activity in his vocation, as to suppose, that during
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the afore-said brewery and distillery period, he was totally idle to all other opportunities of gratifying his *penchant* for the property of others.

We have, a few pages back, acquainted the reader with the parentage of Mrs. Poultney, alias Mrs. Hickeringill.—Not that we meant any reflection on that lady's character ; or, that we mean to throw out the least insinuation against it, or asperion on it.—On the contrary, we mean to convey to the reader the idea, that she was the only identical person, who ever had it in their power to prevail on Mr. Price, to do for once in his life, *one honest act*.

We have before said, that Mrs. Hickeringill was the daughter of a gentleman of that name, whose elder daughter was married to a Mr. Wood, a brewer in the Borough ; and, therefore, Mrs. Wood and Mrs. Hickeringill, must have been sisters.—By this marriage, which was consummated somewhere about the year 1753, there was a child, which grew up among the sons and daughters of men, and was called ELIZABETH. She was lovely to
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the eye, and as sweet as the rose of Sharon or the lilly of the Valley, but not quite so tall as the cedar of Lebanon. This young damsel, of whom, from the earliest days to the present period, malignity has never yet thrown a dart, had, by the laws of relationship, the honour to be the niece of this Mrs. Hickeringill, and was at a boarding school at Camberwell in Surry, when our hero carried on his brewery, or rather his distillery, in the parish of St. Mary, Lambeth.

At this period of time, Mr. Price was not far from forty years of age, and the young lady little better than fourteen, when she was first introduced to our hero.—His eyes instantly caught the flame of love, and his heart was fired with an ardour, that nothing could extinguish but the possession of this lady, who was graced with many natural, and every acquired accomplishment.—To be sure, there was the paltry consideration of 3000*l.* which no person could deprive her of when she came of age, together with all interest due on the same, and large expectancies from Mr. Wood, in case the match met his approbation; but it is to be hoped, that our great man was not moved by any such pecuniary motives, nor can we see

how it is possible, in a warm, tender, and pure love, such as he pretended he was then smitten with.—Be it how it will, and let the reader think what he pleases, Mr. Price could say what the renowned Othello said on the same occasion.

*That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,
It is most true—True, I have married her.
The very head and front of my offending,
Hath this extent—No more.*

Now, we humbly beg, no ill-natured critic will say, that we draw a line of comparison between Othello and Desdemona, and Mr. Price and Miss Wood, because the first was a *black*. We do not mean any such insinuation, for their minds were as different as their faces.—He might as well say we compared him with Prince Oroonoko, in page 35 of this history, as that we did the face of a chimney sweeper to the complexion of the Prince.

We beg, not to be understood as meaning any such thing; but there is a person in the same page mentioned, whose name we shall not repeat, and for which, the curious reader, if he
pleases,

pleases, is at liberty to search, that perhaps bears a nearer degree of comparison to Mr. Price, than either of these two black gentlemen, who had never any existence, but in the fire of the poet's fancy : whereas, the person we allude to, and to whom he may more properly be compared, had real existence, and was actually hung up at Tyburn.

The two ladies, indeed, no person can object to, as bearing some degree of comparison — They were

*Maidens never bold, but of spirits
So still and quiet, that their motions blushed
At themselves.*

and they were both *stolen* away. The one, was murdered, and the fortune and peace of mind of the other sacrificed ; notwithstanding which, they both exclaimed,

*Be as your pleasures may teach you—whatever
You are, I am still obedient.*

What became of the aunt, after this marriage, which highly incensed Mr. Wood against

his daughter, we cannot possibly say ; whether she continued in the house, as aunt and companion to Mr. Price ; or, whether she gave place to her niece, and retired on a pension, and so became an occasional visitor, we cannot determine. Yet it is true, that not long after this marriage, like most other great men, he again took a trip to the continent, on account of the before-mentioned *burglary*, but left his young bride behind him ; who, we are informed, took up her residence, during that period, with her aunt, Mrs. Hickeringill, in London.

We are certain also, that during his travels, on this occasion, he was at most of the courts in Europe, and particularly at Denmark.—He was at Copenhagen, during the time of the unhappy fate of the late Queen Matilda, sister to our present sovereign, which was in the year 1772 ; and from his failure at Lambeth, which was in the year 1771, when a warrant from the Commissioners of his Majesty's Excise, dated Oct. 11th, 1771, as will be hereafter seen, we hear no more of him till the middle of the year 1773, when he returned to England, and assumed the name of WILLIAM PARKS.

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The reason of his wearing this name, or rather relinquishing his right one, is pretty apparent. He was not only apprehensive of being apprehended in consequence of the conviction before the Commissioners aforesaid; but there were other little debts, which, he had some reason to fear, might be stirred up against him, and to avoid these, he not only disguised his name, but his person.

It was in these two disguises we again get hold of Mr. Price in a lodging, in Crown Street, King Street, Westminster, and of one little advantage more, he took of Mr. W—, the gentleman of whom he had already borrowed 2000*l*. which proves him to have been of a too busy, and of too bustling a disposition, to set himself down contented with one advantage of one person.

In this situation, therefore, he sent letters to Mr. W—, complaining greatly of his distressed situation; that he did not dare come home for fear of being arrested, that his wife and family were in great distress, and concluded with imploring Mr. W— to go to them and afford them some relief.

Mr. W—, touched with the consideration of such represented distress, paid a visit to them in Crown Street, where he was introduced to a lady that pretended to be Mrs. Price; but whom we have many reasons to believe was not the person she assumed herself to be.

Nor would we wish the reader to suppose, even for a moment, that it is possible it might have been Mrs. Hickeringill, Mrs. Price's aunt. For, if Mr. Price spoke *truth*, which we are really apprehensive he did not always strictly adhere to, Mrs. Hickeringill must have been dead about a year, at least he had so persuaded Mrs. Price; who, at the time of her husband's apprehension, was never more astonished in her life, than to find her aunt alive, when, soon after the time of his finishing business in Lambeth, he had so far imposed upon her, as to make her believe that she was actually dead.

But the delight of Mr. Price's soul, was to deal in *fiction*, and, perhaps, in this case, there might have been good reasons, for such an imposition. He might very likely, have found it necessary, to trump up such a story, and domestic
reasons,

reasons, most probably, induced him to that, which was so conformable to his natural propensity, *viz.* art and diffimulation.

But, be it as it may, Mr. W— was introduced to a lady whom he conceived to have been Mrs. Price. She lay in bed, and in a state, seemingly to be much pitied—poverty was every where apparent in the room, and the lady looked more a ghost than a living person.—Nor did her voice at all disagree with her looks. It was low, faint, and dejected—She related her distresses to Mr. W—, in a manner that convinced him of the reality of the scene around him; who touched with concern at her misfortunes, humanely gave her two guineas for present support, and promised to call again in a few days.

It was not long after, however, before Mr. W— was convinced, that the whole pretended distress was a trick to cheat him out of more money; that the lady, who pretended to have been so exceedingly ill, was painted for that purpose, by the identical hands of Mr. Charles Price, and that they had rehearsed the
dying

dying scene in order to be compleat in the part before Mr. W— arrived.

This intelligence, however, did not come to him, till it was too late to prevent a larger sum from slipping out of his pocket for benevolent purposes, which the reader will soon see.—The landlord of the house in Crown Street, had overheard the dialogue between the manager and the actress, and knew the former was behind the curtain whilst the latter performed the sick-scene; of which he informed Mr. W—.

But let not the reader conceive, that Mr. W— was the only dupe, in this way, to the deceptions of this great man.—He practiced it with success for several weeks, on several *friends* and *acquaintances*; and raised contributions from them sufficient to enable him to support himself in splendor in the prison of his majesty's Palace-Court, in the Borough of Southwark, called the Marshalsea, to which place one of those friends had so cruelly consigned him.

We are given to understand, that this residence in so eminent a place was taken up some time about the latter end of the year 1773, and
that

that he had the good fortune to quit the air of his majesty's Palace-Court, the beginning of the year 1784, and took lodgings much more agreeable, wholesome, and convenient, in Tottenham-court Road, which afterwards became the scene of his more heroic actions.

How he came to be disgusted with his abode in that honourable confinement, we are informed, was as follows.—The gentleman who had sued out the writ against our great man for so paltry a sum as 4l. 10s. positively swore, he would be d——d if the *rafcal*, such was the ungentlemanlike epithet he bestowed on an unhappy prisoner, should not lay in jail till his carcase rotted, without he paid the full debt and costs of the action.—Having, however, a spirit to deal with, which, when oppressed, was equally turbulent and equally resolute, our hero as positively swore, that before he would pay one farthing of either, he would be d——d to the centre of perdition.

Let not the reader imagine that there is any thing *outré* in all this. We have known many a plaintiff and defendant equally obdurate, and
equally

equally obstinate, till the manliness of their spirits have brought them and their families to drown all animosity against each other in one and the same prison.

Although this did not happen in the present case, yet the full debt and costs were paid by a gentleman, whom no note of hand, or Warrant of Attorney, at a future date will satisfy, when he calls for the great debt, *viz.* the debt of nature. — To be plain, the plaintiff died, and nobody chusing to administer, because that administration would have involved them in debts far exceeding the creditor account, and the action thereby, not being renewed by a certain process called a *scire facias*, which few understand, and which those who do understand, cannot well explain, Mr. Price, like Shylock's Launcelot, when *the heavens roused up a brave mind*, fairly made use of his legs and ran away from the fiend.

During his residence in Tottenham-Court-Road, being apprehensive that the same trick might be again played him by another hard-hearted and cruel creditor, whose name we are informed was Mr. Thomas Hancock, a butcher in

in the neighbourhood of Lambeth, and who had, a little unluckily for our oppressed hero, found out his retirement; he took the following measure to guard against a visit, so dangerous as that of Messrs. John Doe and Richard Roe.

By way of compromising a debt of about fifteen pounds, he waited on Mr. Hancock, not as Mr. Charles Price, but as Mr. Charles Price's uncle, disguised in all those habiliments, which, when the inside is as white as the outside is black, add a very becoming dignity to the priesthood; but when it chances to be blacker, only serves to render the wearer more truly contemptible, and does more real injury to the cause of virtue, morality, and religion, than even a thousand Mr. Charles Price's, and that is saying a very great deal indeed.

He was dressed in your neat old-fashioned square-toed shoes, little small buckles, and a suit of reverend black, covered with a camblet furtout. His wig, as the wig of Dr. Simony, described by that wit whom we have had occasion several times to mention, had curls as long and as large as the ears of a Newfoundland spaniel.—Added to this, there was a degree of dignity

nity in it which all singular and great men chuse should ornament so profound a type of all human knowledge.—It was not only a pure grizzle, but it had, like the great wig of that great man, Dr. Samuel Johnson, as described by Madame Piozzi, a toupee, which was most eminently finged; and that in order to shew, that the wearer's attention was fixed above, whilst his looks were on books below. — It argued, therefore, that such a man, in such a wig, would inspire more respect in Mr. Hancock than twenty plain dealers, and that his reverence for the cloth would induce him to credit every word of the wearer.

We could as heartily wish that this was not too often the case, with those who have a title to the function, and then their actions would never give the lie to their appearances.

To proceed. To complete the deception, his eye-brows were painted black; he wore a pair of green spectacles, which threw a shade over his features that contributed still more to the disguise, and he waited on Mr. Hancock by candle light.

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To attempt to repeat all that passed, would be too tedious. Suffice it, that Mr. Price exclaimed against his own follies very vehemently, and rallied immoralities with a profound sanctity. He wished, he said, to get his nephew into business again, and he hoped no good Christian would oppose so laudable an assistance. But in order to induce Mr. Hancock to comply with his intended proposal, Mr. Price assured him, that his income and living were such as could only afford to advance a third of his nephew's debts, to those who rigorously insisted on a part; and that his nephew must be entirely ruined, if some good-natured creditors had not, from motives of humanity, consented to wait till Mr. Price, himself, was enabled to discharge even that sum in full for the whole.

Whether the harrangue of this pious priest prevailed most, or whether Mr. Hancock was moved more by the offer of the money, as he looked upon the debt to be of a very desperate nature, we are not quite certain.—True it is, he began to sympathize with Mr. Price's misfortunes, to assure the old divine, that he did not wish to hurt any man; and, so far from prevent-

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ing his nephew from going into business again, he would accept of the offer.—The consequence was, the clergyman offered to give his note for the money at three months, which the butcher refusing, the former laid down five guineas, declaring it was all he had, and likely to have for some time to come ; which the latter, with joy in his countenance, took up, gave a receipt in full of all demands, and pocketed it with no less pleasure.

History informs us, that Mr. Hancock was not the only tradesman that thought himself so very well off by this friend and uncle of our hero's.—We have some others of a similar nature upon record, but as they were satisfied by the same species of friendship, a repetition would be totally needless, and for that reason we did not pursue our hero further in this line of little advantages.

We are come now to a period, which, however, was not quite so fortunate to Mr. Price.—In the former part of these memoirs, we descanted a little upon a certain pack of hounds, whose smell is not very sagacious at certain times,

times, and whose organs of that sense, are at others, as keen as the film over their eyes is thick. We mean Custom-House and Excise Officers, who have always very substantial reasons for the operation of those senses.

They had, some how or other, got scent of Mr. Parks, and were in hot pursuit at this identical time.—*How* it happened we are in the dark, but it may be fairly concluded, that as envy always pursues all great men, and dares not attempt an injury face to face, so lurking in the dark it aimed a dart at Mr. Parks, which hit him effectually.

It was on the day, the ever fatal day, to make it somewhat similar to tragic bombast, when our hero sailed down Holborn, being the 11th day of April, 1774, in pursuit of some honest creditor, whom he knew was in want of cash, and that a trifle, in lieu of the whole, might be considered as exceedingly serviceable; that Mr. JOHN SAUNDERS, Messenger to his Majesty's Commissioners of Excise, laid his cruel talons on the shoulder of Mr. WILLIAM PARKS, exactly opposite Furneal's Inn, conducted him to his

Majesty's jail of Newgate, having no other authority for so daring an undertaking than the following warrant.

Chief Office
of Excise,
London.

WE Commissioners and Governors appointed by His Majesty King George the Third that now is, for the management of His Receipt of Excise, and so forth, do, in His said Majesty's name hereby authorize require and command, you every or any of you, to take and arrest the body of CHARLES PRICE otherwise WILLIAM PARKS, if found within the limits of the weekly bills of mortality; and forthwith to carry the same to the goal or prison of and for the county or place, where you shall take and arrest the same, with a duplicate of this our warrant, there to deliver into the custody of the goaler or keeper of the said goal or prison of or for the said county or place, there to remain in safe custody until the said CHARLES PRICE alias WILLIAM PARKS shall satisfy and pay the sum of ONE THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED POUNDS of lawful money of Great Britain, by us the said Commissioners adjudged against him upon an information exhibited against him before us the said Commissioners and Governors by *Edward Cock*, as well on the behalf of his said Majesty as himself, for that the said CHARLES PRICE alias WILLIAM PARKS, on the twelfth day of September, in the year of our Lord One Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy-one, within the limits and jurisdiction of this Office, had in his custody and possession one private and concealed still, four private and concealed low wine casks, two private wash

Delivered, 19 May, 1774, on Habeas Corpus
before Lord Mansfield.

wasb backs, and one private spirit cask, of which no entry was made, contrary to the form of the statute in such case made and provided: whereof the said CHARLES PRICE alias WILLIAM PARKS stands convicted before us the said Commissioners. And all constables and others his Majesty's officers, are hereby authorized and required to be aiding and assisting to you in the due execution hereof. And the goaler or goalers, keeper or keepers, of such goal or prison to which you shall carry the body of the said CHARLES PRICE alias WILLIAM PARKS is and are hereby authorized and required to receive into his her or their custody the said body; and the same to keep in safe custody until the said CHARLES PRICE alias WILLIAM PARKS shall satisfy and pay the said sum of ONE THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED POUNDS of lawful money of Great Britain, and for your every any or either of your so doing as before is respectively directed, This shall be to you every any or either of you respectively a sufficient warrant and authority. Given under our hands and seals at the Office above-mentioned, this fifteenth day of October, in the eleventh year of His Majesty's reign, and in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy-one.

*To Mr. JOHN SAUNDERS Messenger,
and to all and every other our Messengers belonging to this Office.*

And to the Goaler or Keeper of such goal or prison to whom these presents shall come.

G. Quarme.

Windham Bowyer.

D. Papillon.

Brought to Newgate April 11, 1774.

This Warrant renewed by another dated 13th April, 1774.

We have now, gentle reader, safely conducted our hero *home*, and to a house which is the general rendezvous of truly great men.—But let it be understood, he was not one of those heroes, whose low-lived education and habitual ignorance prompted them to commit *felony* or *murder*, but only for that species of *fraud* which many honest men, who are not found out, daily commit in private, deny in public, hourly assert to be no offence, and still call themselves *the fair tradesmen*.

If, therefore, there is any presumption arising in the reader's mind in favour of that opinion, we humbly beg that Mr. Price may have the full benefit of it, and his character not be blackened on that account any more than he deserves.—All we can say against it is, that it is *contrary to the statute in that case made and provided*; and, therefore, being the law of the land, it behoveth every member of society not to commit any breach or violence against it, if he has any regard to his own personal safety; as such offences are, now and then, punished with fine, imprisonment, and sometimes the gallows.

It may be remembered, that his Majesty's
jail

jail of Newgate was once a dungeon, in which no human being, debtor or felon, save and except a murderer, ought, by the laws of humanity to have been confined. It was a den, too loathsome for rats to reside in, and which the stench drove even those vermin away from. — The cells of the Inquisition, the dreary apartments of the Bastile, the Black Hole at Calcutta, were palaces to this horrid prison. — It had infernal darkness in the noon of the purest day. — Filth were its ingredients, and putrid fevers its constant companions. The eye recoiled at the sight, the nose revolted at the smell, the human frame shook at the dismal appearance; and the debtor was, if possible, less wholesomely accommodated than the felon. — To the great honour of the city of London, it was pulled down and re-built in a manner that reflected credit on their humanity and spirit. — To the eternal shame of others, it was suffered to be burnt down by a banditti of ruffians in the year 1780, when our hero began *his* depredations also on the Bank, in the face of day, and unmolested — but rebuilt in stile and strength that inspires awe in the beholders.

It is no wonder, therefore, that Mr. Price should endeavour to extricate himself from such a wretched situation, which he did by virtue of
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an habeas corpus before the present Mr. Justice Gould, a Judge in the Common Pleas, in order to get to the Fleet Prison; but there being no cause of action against him, in that Court, the Judge could not send him to the Prison of it, the Fleet; and, therefore, he was remanded to Newgate.

If the honest gentleman, who was his solicitor on that occasion, knew the practice, and that he could not be removed to the Fleet from Newgate, without such cause or action being previously lodged in that court, he took care to take the same little advantage of his client, which Mr. Price had so frequently taken of others; viz. squeezing some gold out of his pocket for a purpose, which he was previously assured of, would be ineffectual. And this is a practice which, we fear, is too often carried into execution.—If he did it wilfully, he ought to have been struck off the roll of Attorneys.—If ignorantly, he was unqualified ever to have been on it.

It was not long, however, before Mr. Price took, either by the advice of the same solicitor, or some other ingenious practitioner, a proper method to extricate himself, and this was as follows;

A friendly

A *friendly writ* was sued out against him in the court of King's Bench, for the sum of ten pounds and upwards, in order to obtain a *habeas corpus* before Lord Mansfield.—Now, a *friendly writ* is, when a good-natured man makes an affidavit of debt against another person, who never was indebted to him in his life one single penny, save and except the sum of ten pounds and upwards, due upon a certain note of hand, drawn up for that special purpose; or for pretended money lent, or goods sold and delivered, for which affidavit such good-natured creditor, generally, obtains the valuable consideration of—*two shillings and sixpence*. Not that this happens in all cases, for, there are some kind of attorneys, to the praise and glory of the profession be it spoken, who will refuse to join in subordinations of even such *innocent perjuries*, and then a real creditor, if there is any, obliges the prisoner with an affidavit, whereby he can effect his removal.

For this purpose such a writ was made out, out whether by a disinterested, or two shilling and sixpenny friend, we are not thoroughly informed; nor, whether it was one and the same
solicitor

solicitor in both cases. Let the fact be as it will, it stands upon record that the habeas was sued out on some such writ, that he was taken before Lord Mansfield, who, on the 19th day of May, 1774, committed him into the custody of the Marshal of the King's Bench, there to remain without bail or mainprize till the above sum of 1600*l.* was paid into his Majesty's Treasury, so that he remained only five weeks in Newgate.

—But it is somewhat singular, that during his confinement in this place, he should again send for Mr. W—, and again implore his charity. He had not the modesty to be contented with plundering him of 2000*l.* under friendly and disinterested appearances, nor, of two guineas under the specious pretence of charity; but he must level his third attack on that gentleman, under the same idea he had done the second.

Mr. W— having waited on Mr. Price, and seen him in a situation that must have extorted compassion from the most obdurate heart, with a feeling that did him the utmost honour, slipped five guineas into his hand, and promised him further relief.

Mr.

Mr. Price did not, indeed, receive this extraordinary proof of his friendship, with that cool reserve and confusion, which is the inherent property of a truly grateful heart, but with fifty times the number of protestations that there were guineas; such as my dear friend, and, my good friend, everlasting obligations, eternal gratitude, family thanks, and certain absolute promises of re-payment if ever heaven should put it in his power; and this accompanied with that solemn oath, by G--D.—Whether Mr. W—doubted his gratitude or his protestations, is not very material; nor is it more so, that the same grateful expressions and protestation, were used to half a score more of such friends, during our hero's residence in that scene of wretchedness and horror.

It appears, therefore, from unquestionable authority, that when he informed Mr. Fenwick the governor of Tothil Fields Bridewell, that “Had he never been in Copenhagen, he never should have got out of *Newgate*,” he must have been mistaken; that his Majesty's Lord Chief Justice, was a better friend to him, at that time, than even Majesty itself, and that the perturbation

turbation of mind put Newgate into his head, instead of the King's Bench Prison. This was also the more likely to have been the reason of such mistake, as he was, then, every day under the dread of becoming an inhabitant of that *cavern above ground*.

It was in his Majesty's prison of the King's Bench then, that our hero had another opportunity of resting from his labors ; but that active spirit, which he possessed in so abundant a degree, would not prevail on him to sit down indolently and supinely under a commitment, which is looked on, generally, as perpetual imprisonment.

His great soul rose superior to the difficulties he had to surmount, and in proportion to the weight which seemed to crush him, his strength of mind gathered renewed vigour. He knew that his Majesty was plaintiff, and that, consequently, there was a much greater ground to expect pardon, than if he had been indebted to his Majesty's Prime Minister.

Filled with this idea, he set about writing a pamphlet on the subject of the revolution in
Denmark,

Denmark, and to rescue the memory of his Sovereign's sister, from the degrading reflections which an ambitious party at the court of Copenhagen, headed by the Queen Dowager, endeavoured to throw on her character.

This pamphlet, which he got printed, he sent to Mr. Foote, accompanied with a letter, full of contrition for the injuries he had done him, and stated his distresses in so moving a manner, that that gentleman not only forgave the attacks on his fortune and character; but, greatly to the honour of his humanity, complied with the prayer of Mr. Price, that he would present it to some nobleman of his acquaintance, who had access to the throne, and perhaps, that pamphlet might be the means of procuring his Majesty's pardon and forgiveness.

It was not long before an opportunity offered for Mr. Foote to shew, that he had a heart destitute of all malice; and, that he was not only capable of forgiveness, but eager to do, even his worst enemies, every service in his power.

The late Lord Littleton, who was extremely intimate with Mr. Foote, called on him, one day, when at North End, Fulham.—To this nobleman Mr. Foote produced the letter and pamphlet, and it was agreed that the design was good, although the manner in which it was wrote was coarse, and the language, if we may be allowed the phrase, perfectly imperfect. Having presented one to Mr. Fenwick, a few days before his exit, we had an opportunity of seeing it, and may safely say, it proved he had an understanding capable of developing the intrigues of the court, and to penetrate into its cabals; provided he was not furnished with those materials, when at Copenhagen, which gave his pamphlet the air of truth and sagacity.

However that might have been, Mr. Foote, who was always forward to do kindnesses to every species of merit, asked his lordship, if he would lay it before the then Lord Chamberlain, which he engaged to do, and in a short time it was presented to his Majesty.

It had this advantage accompanying it, that it was the first, and we believe the only pamphlet, published

published on the subject.—Whether the King approved of it we do not know, but it is certain that soon after, a reference, by his Majesty's order, was made to the Lords of the Treasury, who ordered the report of Mr. Price's case to be laid before them, in order to be presented to the King, which as soon as the usual forms of office would allow, was accordingly done.—The Lords of the Treasury, in due time, presented the documents to his Majesty, with their opinion, who, somewhere about the year 1777, was graciously pleased to liberate Mr. Charles Price alias Mr. William Parks, and forgive him a debt of one thousand six hundred pounds in consequence of his *good intentions*.

The reader must observe, that the man who was capable of deceiving every person with whom he had any kind of connection, was ingenious enough also to get himself released from an imprisonment, by the same kind of artifice carried on even up to Majesty itself.—For, we by no means wish it to be understood that Mr. Price had either the interest or the honour of his sovereign or his country at heart. As he knew how to take an advantage of human weaknesses,

he knew how to take an equal advantage of the times, and it wasto him

“ An ill wind that blew nobody good.”

It was in this confinement, however, we are given to understand, that Mr. Wood, the father of Mrs. Price, died, and left Messrs. Hodgson and Perrot, Attorneys of the Temple, trustees for his daughter. As he never could be prevailed on to see or correspond with his son-in-law, so he took care that his daughter should have men of character and reputation for guardians.

The interest of Mrs. Price's fortune Mr. Price always pocketed, but as soon as Mrs. Price had attained the age of twenty-one, which was soon after his aforesaid discharge, he claimed, and got into possession of that fortune, which was 3000l.

We now see him again at large, and with all the additional purity of a *novus homo*, ready to begin the world *de novo*, and with a sum of money, that had he been possessed of one hundredth part of that inclination to honesty, that he was of a settled and determined resolution to rob all mankind,

mankind, he might have been, as he had before declared, worth an 100,000l.—But sorry are we to say of him, that he had such an early inclination for lying, that he never spoke a true word; and such a fixed principle of taking advantages of the world, *and all that is therein*, that it was equally impossible for him to do one honest act. Nay, his very pamphlet proves, that neither wit nor abilities were proof against his projects, and that the king and the beggar were alike dupes to his designs. It was not, therefore, without some reason we gave him the appellation of the SOCIAL MONSTER, and we trust the paradoxical title will be fully justified by the future part of these memoirs, which will conduct him to the crown of complete and accomplished iniquity.

With this property in his possession we trace him in the year 1778 as a Lottery Office-keeper in King-street, Covent-Garden, in the actual name of Charles Price. And perhaps this mode of livelihood best suited his disposition of all others.—His head enabled him to make the most accurate calculations, but his heart would never permit him to enjoy the fruits, even of his *honest*

labours, if such they might be deemed ; for, possible, he never would comply with the demands of a fortunate customer, unless actually terrified into it ; and, to terrify Mr. Price, required no small share of ingenuity and resolution.

This natural propensity to taking little advantages of mankind, qualified him for the situation in which he sat up.—He was servile to the extremity of meanness, where his servility could be recompenced by a shilling ; and he was master of the most consummate effrontery and impudence when justice called upon him for it.—If he paid it, he paid it with an eye to further plunder, and then he abounded with such professions of honesty, that all who could read mankind could see he did not possess a grain of it.—In short, he was not a true Lottery-Office *keeper*, but a rare Lottery-Office *adventurer*.

The following instance, among many others, will serve to explain that character.

Mr. Titmus, of Pimlico, who kept a cane and stick shop there, but who now lives in Oxford Street, had bought of Mr. Price an
eighth

eighth of a ticket, which chanced, as he was informed, to come up a prize of 2000l. and when Mr. Titmus waited upon him for his share of the prize, *viz.* 250l. our adventurer assured him *upon his word and honour* it had come up a *blank*. Not perfectly satisfied, however, with the word or honour of Mr. Price, either separately or jointly, by the advice of some friends he chose to examine the books at Whitehall, and there he, to his great satisfaction, found that his information was literally and *bona fide* true. With this information he posted to Mr. Price, and told him what intelligence he had got at the aforesaid office.—On this, our great man assumed a haughty tone, and in an imperious manner demanded to know if Mr. Titmus thought him either a liar or a cheat? The result, however, was, that when Mr. Price found he could not, by all the polite arguments he was master of, persuade Mr. Titmus to make him a present of 250l. he threatened to kick him out of the office for an impudent lying scoundrel, a fellow that wanted to rob him, and an impostor who made it his business to rob gentlemen who kept *Lottery-Offices*.

It happened, however, fortunately for Mr. Titmus, that he was acquainted with a certain person, who well knew that Mr. Price was a liar, cheat, and impostor, and this was no other person than Mr. Clarke, of the public office, Bow-Street, grand attraper des voleurs des grand chemins, des fausses signatures; voleurs de malles, et des faisseurs d'argent counterfeit.

Mr. Titmus having acquainted Mr. Clarke of the transaction, the latter applied to a gentleman, of whom we have some small knowledge, and he undertook to manage Mr. Price.

For this purpose he waited on him at the office in King-Street, and was received with a submission that indicated some success in the negotiation.—A private interview being demanded, the gentleman was shewn into a back room, and he had no sooner made his business known than, Mr. Price was as insolent as before he had been obsequious.—In fine, they fell to words, and the gentleman, not being quite so much master of the hot and cold as his antagonist, and being also shocked at the impudence and knavery, as he then thought it, of Mr. Price, ventured to call him a *Scoundrel*.

Mr.

Mr. Price, instead of being warmed by such an ignominious epithet, very coolly, and with all the dignity and *non-chalance* becoming a truly great man, replied :

“ O Lord, Sir, I have been called a scoundrel a thousand times, and I assure you it does not make the least impression on me.—
“ My dear Sir, it by no means affects me, I assure you.

The Gentleman finding Mr. Price inflexible to all persuasion to be an honest man, hit on an expedient that he thought might prove more successful than his best oratory. He drew up a copy for a hand-bill, which was verbatim as follows :

CAUTION to the PUBLIC.

Mr. Titmus, of Pimlico, having bought of Mr. Charles Price, of King Street, Covent Garden, lottery office keeper, an eighth of a ticket, which has this day come up a prize of 2000l. the said Charles Price first declared it came up a blank ; but not able to support such a falsehood, has refused, and still refuses to pay the same.

With

With this copy, the gentleman went to a printer in the neighbourhood, and got one of them printed off, with which he pushed away to Mr. Price.—As soon as he made his entrance into the office, he was asked if he wanted to rob it; but producing the hand-bill, and telling Mr. Price, that there were ten thousand of them working off, and to be distributed at the Royal Exchange, to be stuck up in every part of London and Westminster, and the remainder to be delivered daily at his own door, Mr. Price's *furor* abated, and the gentleman with many congees was desired to walk into the parlour.

The adventurer, then, began to expostulate on the amazing run of ill luck that had befallen him, the honesty of his intentions, and the ruin that must inevitably attend him, if such a hand-bill was distributed.—His character, he declared, had hitherto been unimpeached, and he meant to pay every body in time, which he hoped the gentleman would give him.

The latter, however, continuing inflexible, Price promised to pay it if Mr. Titmus would call.

call. He accordingly did so, and luckily got his money; but before Mr. Price paid it, he sent a flaming letter to the late Sir J. Fielding, desiring to know if he had no remedy against a fellow who had threatened to assassinate him, and set fire to his house.

It happened, also, very unfortunately for Mr. Price, that one of Sir J. Fielding's servants was intitled to the quarter of an hundred pounds prize, at the very identical time when this letter came to hand, and not having been able to obtain it, had made his complaint to his master, who, on the receipt of this letter, sent to speak with Mr. Price.

At this audience there was present the gentleman alluded to, when a very humourous scene ensued, from which Mr. Price found himself under the necessity of paying both Mr. Titmus and Sir John's servant in the bargain.

A circumstance happened to him, also, during his residence in King Street, that deserves some little notice.

A book

A book called the Swindler's Chronicle was published, in which our hero was held up, under the initials of Charles P—ce, in which his size, complexion, eyes, nose, and chin, were very closely copied, with an abstract of the characters and colours in which we have so accurately depicted him. His landlord and landlady, who were people of character and reputation in life, having been frequently insulted by him, in terms as gross as unprovoked, were, by one of those strange accidents, which in spite of our utmost care and caution, will discover adverse adventures, instructed who and what their worthy lodger and braggadocio, Mr. Charles Price, really was.—The lady, at last, taking courage, read over to him, in the shop, his own character, in the above Chronicle, supplying the initials with the name at length, and this as often as he insulted her, to the no small mortification, but to the certain sale of the book, which we are credibly informed our great man bought up, that his great actions might not be recorded to posterity.—An honour we now assume to ourselves, and which with infinite pains we have been able to accomplish, in a manner, though not quite so fully perhaps as his various adventures might have enabled us, yet we hope
in

in a way that will do no great discredit to his memory.

But the prize aforesaid, of 2000*l.* coming up, and the creditors becoming quite clamorous, he thought proper to decamp with the ticket, which he had in his possession, and which he sold for the full sum, discount excepted; whereupon, to the great joy and satisfaction of glaziers and joiners, not a single pane or sash in the house remained whole.

We must not also forget, that it was in King Street, Mr. W— again accidentally saw him, and having communicated to him that he had quitted the trade of a cooper, and gone into the brewery line, our hero made use of this remarkable expression, *that a trade was like a fine lady, and he should never think of entering into it, without he fell in love with it.* An advice, by the bye, no ways to be disapproved of, as it is consonant to that maxim of the spectator which says,

“ Keep your shop, and your shop will keep you.”

We have only one more anecdote to relate of this extraordinary genius, before we enter upon

R

a detail

a detail of that business, which proved so fatal to him, A FORGERY ON THE BANK OF ENGLAND, and which we venture to prognosticate will always prove fatal to every man who shall be weak enough to try the experiment.

He set up an Office the next season, in Butcher Row, Temple Bar, in the name of *Parks*; and it must be remembered that the celebrated A. Parks, advertised in a strain as captivating as any of the advertisements of the great Mr. Christie, of auctioneering and puffing memory.

These alluring advertisements our hero copied, with additional improvements, and a paper war began between the two Office-keepers, in which Mr. Price gained the advantage, because he fought his antagonist with his own weapons.— It must be remembered also, that he had some little title to the name of Parks, because, in that name he was committed to Newgate by the Commissioners of Excise; but then it was William and not Anthony Parks; and he used no christian name in such his advertisements from his office in Butcher Row.

It

It was a little previous to the lottery in 1780 he began his first attack on the Bank, when a forged note of 10l. had been taken there, so compleat in all its parts, the engravings, the signatures, the water-marks, the writing, &c. that it passed through various hands unsuspected, and was not discovered till it came to a certain department in the routine of that office, through which no forgery whatever can pass undiscovered — This occasioned a considerable alarm among that truly respectable body of gentlemen; and Notes upon Notes flowing in, various consultations were held, various plans laid, and innumerable were the efforts of detection; but in vain—They were traced up to one man from every quarter, always disguised, always inaccessible; and we will venture to pronounce, the forger would have remained much longer a secret, but for the cool collected plan of Mr. Clarke. Indeed we may venture to assert, that had he been left to his own discretion, to have followed the dictates of his own understanding, and to have carried into execution his own plans, the offender would not have reigned so long; for, although those who took upon them the office, were gentlemen of integrity

and unblemished characters, they were insufficient for the undertaking, as the sagacity of Mr. Price always proved an over-match for their zeal, assiduity, or stratagem. As from its very great importance to society they took the business into their own hands, they found by experience the inefficacy of their measures.

Had Mr. Price permitted a partner in his proceedings—had he employed an engraver—had he procured paper to be made for him, with water marks put into it, he must have been soon discovered—but Price was himself alone: He engraved his own plates, he made his own paper, *with the water-marks*, and his negociator never knew him, thereby confining a secret to his own breast which he wisely deemed not safe in the breast of another; even Mrs. Price had not the least knowledge or suspicion of his proceedings. Having practised engraving till he had made himself sufficient master of it, he then made his own ink to *prove* his own works: having purchased implements and manufactured the water-mark, he next set himself to counterfeit the hand-writings, and succeeded so far as even to puzzle a part of the first body of men
in

in the world. The abilities of the unhappy Ryland were exerted in his profession, and therefore the imposition was to be less wondered at; but here was a novice in the art, capable of equal ingenuity in every department of the dangerous undertaking, from the engraving down to the publication.

We have thought proper to give this general outline of his abilities, that the reader may be enabled to form some idea of the consistency of his conduct, and be prepared for a relation of transactions equally as surprising as those abilities.

It may not, perhaps, be improper to premise, that ever since this period, Mr. Price was necessarily driven into obscurity; for the same artifice that published his forgeries drove him from the society of mankind.—It is also a singular circumstance for reflection, that no man can live happy who offends against the laws of his country, particularly in those instances which, as they are of the most dangerous and destructive tendency, so they naturally call for every exertion of power and office to detect, and

where wisdom and power are united, they never fail in the accomplishment.

We may venture also to say, that, like an able general, who has his eye directed more to the consequences of a defeat than to the pursuits of a success, previously uncertain, he prepared every measure and scheme progressively from the commencement to the final accomplishment of his undertaking. He was therefore, on any emergency, never at a loss what step to procure.—If from any unfortunate event he should be suspected in his mechanical operations, he took care to carry them into execution, not where he lived with Mrs. Price, but at another lodging with Mrs. Hickeringill, alias Mrs. Poultney, and to negotiate at a third lodging, where he was not even known by his own name, or person, and where consequently he could not be described by either.

This will be better explained by adding, that when he worked it was with Mrs. Poultney, when he published it was in his assumed character of PATCH, so that he was Patch or Price just as he pleased.

His

His plan of negotiation also was the result of the most mature deliberation, planned on the securest principle, and formed and carried on with a sagacity that astonished every agent that went in search of him.—The persons he engaged never knew him in his real character; and as he was well convinced that *humanum est errare*, so he took all possible precautions to be guarded against contingencies, whether his agents were foolish, deceitful, or faithful.—He never sent an emissary to negotiate a note that he ever lost sight of him, either personally or by his trusty companion Mrs. Poultney, and therefore he could never be surprized in the great object of putting off his counterfeit notes.

Another precaution, equally artful, he likewise took.—Mrs. Price had conceived her aunt to have been dead for the last seven or eight years, and though he carried on the connection to the day of his death, and his time divided daily and equally between the aunt and niece, yet he did not think proper to entrust the latter with a secret which affected his life.—He knew that his wife was all innocence, without art, or understanding in the ways of the world, to be what is
commonly

commonly called cunning, but perhaps had had some little reason to be jealous. In short, she was perfect simplicity.—He prudently, therefore, thought her not fit to be trusted. Mrs. Hickingill, the aunt, was a character extremely opposite to that of her niece; she was really cunning, artful, and capable of executing any plan which Price would chalk out for her. In short, she was the woman after *Price's own heart*, and having had the judgment to select her for his operations, there is no wonder, under the tutelage of Mr. Price, she proved a justification of his choice.

It is easy, therefore, to be discovered why Mrs. Price was not thought by him a fit object to be trusted with so important a secret. As he perfectly knew she was too fond of her filthy bargain, so he wisely judged, that a want of understanding in a pretty woman, is a certain proof of the want of a necessary reservation in that instrument, which makes them the greatest blessing or curse that can befall mankind; and that he ought to be equally apprehensive of her fondness and simplicity, in a case where his own life was so immediately concerned.

To

To proceed.—The business becoming truly alarming, the Directors of the Bank came at last to the resolution of advertising the offender, and describing him by the following hand-bill, which was distributed through every corner wherever the least scent could be obtained of the supposed delinquent.

“ Public-Office, Dec. 5, 1780.

“ A F O R G E R Y. .

“ Whereas a person, answering the following
“ description, stands charged with forging two
“ notes, one for 40l. and the other for 20l.
“ whoever will apprehend him, or give such
“ immediate notice at this office as may be the
“ means of apprehending him, shall receive One
“ HUNDRED Pounds reward on his COMMIT-
“ MENT.

“ Or if any person concerned in the above
“ forgery, (except the person here-under de-
“ scribed) will surrender and discover his or her
“ accomplices, he or she will be admitted an
“ evidence for the crown, and, on conviction
“ of

“ of any one offender therein, receive Two
 “ Hundred Pounds reward.

“ And if any engraver, paper-maker, mould-
 “ maker, or printer, can give information of
 “ the engraving any plate, making any mould
 “ or paper, or printing any note resembling
 “ Bank Notes, shall receive Two Hundred
 “ Pounds reward on conviction of any of the
 “ offenders in the above forgery.

“ He appears about fifty years of age, about
 “ five feet six inches high, stout made, very sal-
 “ low complexion, dark eyes and eye-brows,
 “ speaks in general very deliberately, with a fo-
 “ reign accent ; has worn a black patch over
 “ his left eye, tied with a string round his head,
 “ sometimes wears a white wig, his hat flapped
 “ before, and nearly so at the sides, a brown
 “ camblet great coat, buttons of the same, with
 “ a large cape, which he always wears so as to
 “ cover the lower part of his face ; appears to
 “ have very thick legs, which hang over his
 “ shoes as if swelled, his shoes are very broad
 “ at the toes, and little narrow old fashioned
 “ silver buckles, black stocking breeches, walks
 “ with

" with a short crutch stick with an ivory head,
 " stoops, or affects to stoop very much, and
 " walks slow as if infirm ; he has lately hired
 " many hackney coaches in different parts of
 " the town, and been frequently set down in or
 " near Portland-Place, in which neighbourhood
 " it is supposed he lodges.

" He is connected with a woman who answers
 " the following description :—She is rather
 " tall and genteel, thin face and person, about
 " thirty years of age, light hair, rather a yellow
 " cast in her face, and pitted with the small
 " pox, a downcast look, speaks very slow, some-
 " times wears a coloured linen jacket and pet-
 " ticoat, and sometimes a white one, a small
 " black bonnet, and a black cloak, and assumes
 " the character of a lady's maid.

" N. B. It is said, that about fifteen months
 " ago he lodged at Mrs. Parker's, No. 40,
 " Titchfield-Street, (who is since dead) at the
 " time he went by the name of WIGMORE."

The reason of his assuming this name may be
 tolerably well guessed, if the reader refers back
 to

to that part of this history where he duped Mr. Wigmore of fifty-five guineas, as Mr. Price and an Ecclesiastic, who was uncle to the lady of so much fortune, so much beauty, and so good a character.

There is no doubt but that the above advertisement drove our hero to his wits :—it forced him for a time to refrain from the circulation, and for some weeks put a total stop to it. But it was not long before he re-commenced his schemes, and Mr. PATCH again came forth with all his secret *eclat*, notwithstanding every scheme that ingenuity could devise had been practised to detect them.

It is not unworthy observation, that one of those hand-bills was delivered at the very house which he daily resorted to, where Mrs. Hickingill resided, and where all his implements were fixed. This was in Tottenham-Court-Road. By these means Price was apprized of his immediate danger, and consequently took his measures accordingly.—It certainly answered the intention, as, in the common phrase, it *blew him up*, but it as certainly was the means that

that prevented his then being apprehended. — Eagerneſs to ſecure, baniſhed that foreſight and caution which are ever neceſſary whenever it is in purſuit of artful villainy. The animal, whoſe ſagacity is a proverb, can never be ſecured in haſte ; to entrap him requires ſuperior patience, caution, and cunning.

But the manner in which he procured his negotiator, was, perhaps, of all others, the greateſt inſtance of penetration ; and the mode in which he employed him, the moſt ſingular effort of prostituted genius that ever employed itſelf in ſuch a dangerous deſign. — It was as follows.

The NARRATIVE.

PREVIOUS to the commencement of the Lottery for the year 1780, Mr. Price put an Advertisement into the Daily Advertiser, in which he required a servant who had been used to live with a single gentleman, and the direction was to C. C. Marlborough-Street Coffee-House, Broad-Street, Carnaby Market. Samuel —, an honest young man, who at that time lived with Mr. Preston, a musical instrument maker in the Strand, and whose surname, for very obvious reasons, we conceal, not being much wanted by his master, and having been desired by him to look into the papers for a place, happening to read Mr. Price's Advertisement, he accordingly sent a letter to the Marlborough-Street Coffee-House, as directed.

He heard nothing of this for a week, when one evening, just as it was dusk, a coachman enquired for the man who had answered the Advertisement, saying, there was a gentleman over the way in a coach who wanted to speak with him.

On

On this the young fellow was called, and went to the coach, where he was desired to step in. There he saw an apparent old man affecting the foreigner, seemingly very gouty, wrapped up with five or six yards of flannel about his legs, a camblet furtout buttoned up over his chin, close to his mouth, a large patch over his left eye, and every part of his face so hid, that the young fellow could not see any part of it, except his nose, his right eye, and a small part of that cheek.

To carry on the deception still better, Mr. Price thought proper to place the man on his left side, on which eye the patch was, so that the old gentleman could take an askaunce look at the young man with his right eye, and by that means discover only a small portion of his face. He appeared, by this disguise, to be between sixty and seventy years of age; and afterwards, when the man saw him standing, not much under six feet high, owing to boots or shoes, with heels very little less than three inches high. Added to this deception, he was so buttoned up and straightened as to appear perfectly lank.

It may not be here ill-timed, to those who did not know him, to give the true description of his person. He was about five feet six inches high, a compact neat-made man, square shouldered, and inclined to corpulency. His legs were firm and well set, but, by nature, his features made him look much older than he really was, which at that time was near fifty. His nose was aquiline, and his eyes small and grey; his mouth stood very much inwards, with very thin lips, his chin pointed and prominent, with a pale complexion; but what contributed as much as any thing to favour his disguise of speech, was his loss of teeth. He walked exceedingly upright, was very active and quick in his walk, and was something above what we describe a man to be, when we call him a *dapper made man*.

To Samuel, Mr. Price affected great age, much bodily infirmity, a faint hectic cough, with a disability of almost getting out of the coach. Having been seated by the side of Mr. Price, he was told he was wanted as an under servant to a young nobleman of great fortune, under age, and then in the Country, naming
Bedfordshire

Bedfordshire, to whom our hero was, and had been some years guardian.

He then began to enquire into the particulars of Samuel's life, of which having been informed, and finding him a young fellow, fit for the purpose, honest and ingenuous, he talked to him about wages, whilst Samuel enquired, whether he was to be in livery or not? To this question the old gentleman replied, that he could not really tell, for the young Nobleman was a very whimsical character, and that was a circumstance which might be settled hereafter.

To carry on the farce, he desired Samuel to call his master to the Coach to give him a character, which being done, and that gentleman giving him such a one as Price pretended to approve of, a bargain was struck for 18s. per week, and a direction given to call on Mr. BRANK, our hero's assumed name, at No. 39, Titchfield Street, Oxford Street.

Pursuant to the appointment, which was the second or third evening after, Samuel went to Titchfield Street, there saw this guardian of a

minor Nobleman, whom Samuel was to serve, by waiting on this Mr. Brank.

At this place, Mr. Price resumed his discourse respecting his ward, the whimsicalness of his character, the prodigality of his ways, and the hard task he had to prevent him from squandering his money away, especially in dabbling with those deceitful allurances, called *Lottery Tickets*. That, although he was a Guardian, to the Nobleman, he was still obliged to comply with those whims, against his own inclination, and in opposition to all advice and remonstrance.

Our hero next boasted of the happy prospects for Samuel by serving such a master, and Samuel talked of his wages and cloaths, and again enquired whether he was to be in livery or not? It was concluded, however, that for the present he should procure a drab coat, turned up with red, till the nobleman's pleasure was known, or he came to town.

This conversation, which affords a fine picture of art and simplicity on one side, and perfect duplicity

duplicity on the other, leads to a circumstance very well worth regarding. Samuel was ordered to get the cloaths at his own charge, and make out his bill—the former he did, but the latter he had no opportunity, as the reader will soon perceive. And this conduct exactly corresponded with Price's character, who never was known to part with a shilling out of one hand, till he had half a guinea for it in the other. Samuel bought the cloaths, but was never re-paid what he laid out for them. A circumstance must be observed here also: Samuel was still placed on the left side of the old gentleman, on which side the patch was, so that during the whole of the conversation, Samuel could never see the right side of the old gentleman's face.

Having taken his leave of this old gentleman, he was ordered to come again in the evening of the first day of the drawing of the Lottery, under pretence that he seldom went to the Nobleman's town house of an evening, and to avoid giving Samuel unnecessary trouble, he was ordered to come to the same place.

On that evening Samuel punctually attended,
when

when our hero pulled out a variety of papers, letters, &c. and told Samuel he had received orders from the thoughtless young nobleman to purchase Lottery tickets, as a venture against his coming to town, and in that business he meant to employ him. For this purpose, he produced some seeming Bank-notes, and gave Samuel two, one of 20l. the other of 40l. He also directed him to take the number and dates of them on a piece of paper, for fear of losing them, to go to a Lotery Office in the Hay-market, and with the one of 20l. to purchase *an eight guinea chance*: from thence he was to go to the corner of Bridge Street, Westminster, to buy another out of the 40l. note, and wait at the door of the Parliament Street Coffee-house till Mr. Brank came to him.

With these notes, and data, Samuel went to the Hay Market and bought the eight guinea chance with the 20l. note. Having got the balance he went to the corner of Bridge Street, and bought another with the 40l. note, pursuant to directions; and was going to the Parliament Street Coffee-house to meet his master, when, from the opposite side of the way he was hailed by

by him, complimented on his speed, and informed that he had been so quick, that he, Brank, had not had time to get to the Coffee-house. He was then interrogated if he had made the purchases, and replying in the affirmative, he was again commended for his diligence. Our hero also enquired if any mistake had happened, and all this, with his usual coughing, imbecility of speech, and feigned accent.

We forgot to mention, that when Samuel received the notes, he received also as many canvas bags, as he was ordered to buy shares, or chances. He was directed also to put every distinct share, and the balance coming out of each note, into a separate bag; for fear, as his master said, the chance of one office might be confused with the chance of another, and Samuel thereby puzzled to know where he had bought the different chances; as by such confusion, or forgetfulness, it might not be recollected where to apply to, in case of a fortunate number.

Mr. Brank having then secured the chances and balances, Samuel was ordered to go to Goodluck's at Charing Cross, from thence to
King

King Street, Covent Garden; York Street, Covent Garden; to purchase some small shares and chances at each, and to meet his master at the City Coffee-house, Cheapside.

To all these places Samuel went, and having bought his numbers, and changed his notes, as he was going along York Street, his master called to him from a coach, pretended he was fortunate in thus seeing him, made Samuel step in, got the produce of the forgery, and away they wheeled to the City.

In their way thither, Master Brank applauded his new servant's dispatch, and gave him more Notes, to the amount of 400l. with instructions to purchase a variety of shares and chances, at different offices about the Exchange. He directed him also, as before, to put the chances belonging to each office in a separate bag.

Samuel having got out of the coach in Cheapside, left his employer in the carriage, and executed his commissions with punctuality and success: he then returned agreeable to his orders, to the City Coffee-house, where he had waited
but

but a few minutes, before Mr. Brank came hobbling up to him, and took him into a coach that was waiting hard by. There he began complaining of his health and his infirmities, observing, that the fatigues of business had kept him longer than he expected; but warned Samuel to be always most exceedingly punctual.

Our hero's reason for this punctuality was the dread of a discovery, and to prevent consultations by which he might be detected. In the course of their journey to the end of Long Acre, where the coachman was ordered to drive, he endeavoured to amuse his servant with flattering promises for his attention and fidelity; and at the time of parting with him, even put a guinea into his hand. Whether it was given with a judicious design, or whether it was in consequence of a momentary impulse of generosity, for his having been fortunate enough to transmute his counterfeit Bank paper into real gold, we will not positively determine, though a tolerable opinion may be formed from this fact — that it was the only money poor Samuel ever was paid, although he had then obtained cash, and other valid securities, to the amount of fourteen hundred pounds, on those forged notes; in
doing

doing which, and in cloaths, he had expended seven pounds for his master's use. On parting in Long Acre, Samuel was ordered to be in waiting, for a few days, at his old master's in the Strand, till he was sent for.

As this plan was the routine of his employment, it will only be necessary now, to inform our readers, that, whenever Samuel went into an office, a woman, unobserved by him, always walked in at the same time, looked about her, as if accompanying somebody who was in the shop, and as soon as Samuel had done his business, the lady likewise walked out.—This lady now proves to have been Mrs. Poultenev, alias Mrs. Hicckeringill, described in the Advertisement and hand-bill issued by the Bank. This lady always accompanied our hero in a coach whenever he went out, and stuck close to Samuel at every Office. As soon as he had safely got out, she stepped across the way to Price, who was in the Coach, informed him of the success, and then Samuel was hailed, and the property secured, for fear the servant might play the master a trick and decamp with the booty, Mrs. Poultenev always keeping out of sight, and what is most

most exceedingly remarkable, Samuel never saw her during his servitude to Mr. Brank.

From Titchfield Street, and during his whole residence there, which was but a week, Price always appeared and went out as Brank; and Mrs. Poulteney, whom he took up at their private lodgings in Tottenham Court Road, was thereby ready to receive the disguise, in case of any accidental discovery; so that if necessity required it, he was instantly shifted from Brank to Price, and Price to Brank, as occasion required, and by this means Samuel rendered incapable of saying, "*That was the man that had employed him.*"

We return now to the narrative: On the next Sunday morning, a coachman came and enquired for Samuel; but Mr. Preston informed him, that though Samuel worked, he did not lodge there, and that he should not see him till the next morning. The coachman, who held a parcel in his hand, which he said was for Samuel, was desired to leave it, and he should have it the next day. The coachman replied, he was ordered not to leave it, but to take it back in

T

case

case he could not see the man, and accordingly went across the way with it. It happened, however, that Mr. Preston there saw the elderly gentleman, with whom he had conversed on Samuel's character a few days before, to whom the coachman delivered the parcel, and saw him get into a coach, but in a minute the coachman returned and left it.

This parcel contained notes to the amount of 300l. with a letter directing him to buy, on the next morning, a sixteenth, an eight-guinea chance, and a whole ticket; to repeat his purchases at different offices, with the usual precautions, till the whole were changed, and to meet his master, Mr. Brank, at Mill's Coffee-house, Gerard Street, Soho, at twelve o'clock the next day. Having followed the directions, and succeeded, he went to meet his master as ordered.

On enquiry at the coffee-house, he found that no such man had been there; but in a few minutes, as he was standing at the coffee-house door, a coachman came up to him and told him, a gentleman at the corner of Macclesfield street, wanted to speak with him. On this Samuel went

went and found his master, Brank, in a coach, who ordered him to come in, and made him sit on the left hand, as before described, that Samuel still could only see the *patch-side* of his master's face.

The tickets, shares, chances, and balances having been delivered; Mr. Brank ordered his servant to bid the coachman drive towards Hampstead, and in the way he gave Samuel three sixteenths as a reward for his care and diligence. He now talked much of his ward, and said, he would be in town in a day or two, and that he would speak highly of Samuel's industry. On these subjects Mr. Brank preached 'till they reached Mother Black-Cap's, Kentish Town, and then Samuel was bid to order the coachman to turn round. In their way back, he had fresh notes given him to the amount of 500l. with the same directions, to lay them out in the same manner about the 'Change, and to meet his master at the same place in the evening, where Mr. Brank said he should dine; but now, Samuel was ordered not to dispose of these notes at the same offices he had done the others, and the reason for this need not be explained.

Having performed this task also, just as he got up to the coffee-house door, a porter accosted him, and conducted him to his master, who was in a coach a little way off. But Samuel was now blamed for his delay, a feigned anger assumed, with a declaration, that he would not do if not punctual, that he had exceeded his time, and that the nobleman was very particular in time, even to a minute. Samuel apologized, Brank got hold of the cash, &c. and then ordered him to go forward to the New Inn, Westminster-Bride, and hire a post-chaise to carry them to Greenwich, to meet the nobleman's steward, who was also his banker, and to whom he was going for more money to purchase more tickets; making, at the same time, several observations on the imprudence and prodigality of his ward.

When they came to Greenwich, Samuel was ordered to go to the Ship and prepare a dinner, while Brank pretended to be negotiating his business; and instructed him also, not to wait longer than three o'clock, but to go to dinner, at that time, if he, Brank, did not return.

Samuel

Samuel having dined by himself, at half past four o'clock Brank came hobbling, coughing, and seemingly out of breath with fatigue—They drank tea together, at the Ship, and afterwards returned to town in the chaise; but here it should be observed, that Sam was the pay-master for his dinner and pleasures of the day, under pretence of our hero's having no change.

From Greenwich they drove to Lombard-street, and then discharged the chaise. There, Samuel received more notes to the amount of 350l. which he got rid of in his usual way; and at the City Coffee-house was again fortunate enough to meet his master before he could get to the door. He was then ordered to attend the next evening at his master's lodgings, which he accordingly did three or four times, in the course of which he negotiated 500l. more in the same manner.

In negotiating the last sum which Samuel received, he, a little unluckily, visited Brooksbank's and Ruddle's. There he was interrogated whom he lived with, &c. and in this conversation honest Samuel said he was servant to a very rich

nobleman's guardian, that he was at board wages, and gave his address to his old master Mr. Preston.

This 500l. which Samuel had negotiated in the course of the evening, he was too late, by an hour, to deliver to his master. What our hero's feelings were, on this occasion, may be pretty easily guessed; and it may fairly be presumed, that with fear, suspense, and guilt, he must have been in the situation of the damned.

When Samuel came to Mills's coffee-house, he found he had been enquired after by a porter, and he was in a perplexity what to do with so much cash.—Whatever thoughts occurred to him, or whatever ideas had suggested themselves to his fancy; whether to seek out his master and restore it, or to return to his own lodgings, and convert it to his own use, we cannot, perhaps, properly determine.—It is true, however, that if he had taken the last resolution, it would have turned out most exceedingly to his advantage. It would have enabled him to have done many pretty things, and we may assert, with some degree of boldness, that no action of *trouer* would

would have been brought against him for a *conversion* of so much cash to his own proper use and behoof.

Perhaps had he known what would have been the event, it is most likely he would have taken the latter resolution; for it was the last sum his old master ever entrusted him with. He had been guilty of an unpardonable offence—the want of *punctuality*, and therefore was never after to be considered as a safe, or trusty servant to so very punctual and precise a master.

He was however soon released from his perplexities, for whilst he was standing in the street, his whole faculties engaged in deep contemplation, a porter stepped up to him, and told him that there was an old gentleman wanted to speak with him under a gateway in Macclesfield-street, which is at the bottom of Dean-street, and at the corner of Gerrard-street.

He immediately went there, and found Master Brank standing under a gateway, who, no doubt, had watched his servant coming to the coffee-house,

house, and then retired and sent the above porter.

Not a word then passed; but Samuel having been ordered to call a coach, they both got in, and orders were given to drive to Soho Square. On the way, heavy complaints were made against Samuel, for his want of *punctuality*, and Master Brank having secured the cash, he discharged Samuel, at the corner of Bateman's Buildings, told him he was going to sup at Mr. Spence's, in Soho Square, with a party of gentlemen, and directed him to be in waiting till sent for.

This was the last time Samuel ever saw Master Brank, till our hero was apprehended and brought to Bow-street, which made it a period of near six years. Thus ends the narrative of our great man's negotiating of 1400l. of forged Bank notes, without any person ever knowing, or seeing him to know him, and that in the space of a few days, with perfect safety to himself, and without the least fear of a surprize.

We have before said, that Samuel had negotiated one of the notes at Branscombe's and Ruddle's,

dle's, and that he was there interrogated with whom he lived, &c.—That note, having in a few days got to the Bank, it was traced up to Branscombe's, and by them it was, that an honest, unsuspecting young man, but possessed of rather too much credulity, was discovered to have been the innocent agent of one of the most artful and profligate impostors that ever disgraced human nature. It will remain also for ages, a lamentable and standing proof, that neither age, character, or situation, could guard against the designs of such artful and precatious duplicity.

Application having been immediately made to Sir Sampson Wright, Samuel was soon paid a visit by that magistrate, accompanied by Mr. Bond, who was then clerk, at the Public Office, Bow-street, but who is now a magistrate there. And, *it is a consummation devoutly to be wished*, that every magistrate in the commission of the peace in every county in England, as well as the city and liberty of Westminster, was as well qualified for so important and sacred a trust, as the said Mr. Nicholas Bond—We should have neither *ignorance* nor *corruption* to encounter in the due administration of justice, nor would the commission
for

for Middlesex and Westminster be disgraced by wretches, who can neither write their own names, or read an act of parliament, and have no idea or regard for the welfare of the state, further than is compatible with their scandalous partiality, or the dirty emoluments of their more scandalous trading offices, which, like the blood of Abel, *crieth aloud from Earth to Heaven for the vengeance of the Lord.*

Sickened with the subject, let us return to our history. And here we entertain an idea, that like a farce after a deep tragedy, banishes the horror that had before *surrounded us on every side.*

It was by the unfortunate visit to Brooksbanks's, that the old gentleman *below*, who had hitherto been on very familiar terms with the old gentleman *above*, played off one of his customary ill humours for a moment, had forsaken his friend, and thereby put a temporary period to his progress; for it is evident, that matters of this kind cannot be effected without the first-mentioned gentleman's constant attendance, direction, and protection.

Samuel

Samuel thus apprehended, was conducted to Bow-street, and examined by the magistrates and gentlemen of the Bank, where he told his artless tale ; but to which no credit was given, and he was committed to Tothilfields Bridewell, on suspicion of having counterfeited the notes of the Bank of England.

The astonishment of this young fellow on his apprehension, the dread he was in of being executed as a forger of counterfeit Bank notes, the horror of being confined in a prison, which to him was perfectly a new scene, and the impossibility of his giving any clue, whereby the old impostor could be secured, must form in the mind of the reader, a combination of ideas which would be impossible for us to describe. Certain it is, the directors of the Bank and the magistrates, were equally astonished at the sagacity of the manufacturer, who had, hitherto, by the most artful of all deceptions, evaded every possibility of detection. Nor could they be at all satisfied of honest Sam's innocence, although his story was, in part, confirmed by Mr. Preston.

It

It is evident also from these examinations, they either paid little credit to his story, or they thought, by keeping him in custody, the legality of which is not the present question, to be able thereby, to arrive at some information, which would throw a light on the forger. Whatever were their motives, they provided for him in prison, and that circumstance softened his captivity, which otherwise must have made his situation truly deplorable.

Samuel's examinations were many and frequent, and the whole of the transactions taken as minutely as we have stated them. The scheme laid to secure Mr. Brank was as follows. Samuel had been ordered by Brank to stay till he was sent for, Moses Morant an officer of Bow-street, was stationed at the shop in the Strand, where Samuel worked, in case our hero should call in the mean time.

A few days elapsed, when Samuel received a message to meet his master the next day at Mills's coffee-house, exactly at eleven o'clock, and the second plan to lay hold of him was accordingly concerted. Samuel was ordered, by Mr. Bond

not to go till five minutes *past* the time; Morant to attend at a distance, disguised as a porter, with a knot on his shoulder; and Mr. Bond to be dressed as a lady, to follow at a small distance.

Thus equipped, they sallied forth, and when Samuel came to the coffee-house, he found that a real porter had that instant been there, and enquired for such a person, in such a livery, and could have been hardly got out of the door. This information Samuel directly communicated to the *lady*, and Samuel was sent back to wait; but the aforefaid old gentleman *below*, who, in the mean time, had been taking a bit of a nap, and had, luckily for the old gentleman *above*, waked in an exceeding good humour, was determined to be too many for their mutual enemy. Having seated himself by the side of his friend Brank, in a hackney coach hard by, he discovered, in the manner he did to the young student at Madrid, the momentary conversation between Samuel and the said disguised personages. Both the old gentlemen, therefore, took immediate flight, hugging, and caressing each other on this fortunate discovery, leaving Samuel Morant, and the

lady, as cruelly disappointed as the said two gentlemen were highly pleased at the escape.

The reader, we hope, will not be offended at this imitation of Old Harry,—we mean FIELDING, who never was more severe upon vice, than when he treated it ludicrously.

To return. An instant *rust* was made in Titchfield-street, but in vain; they found that Brank had never been there since Samuel and he had left it together; and, as a smack of Scrub's account of Archer and Aimwell, they neither knew *who he was, where he came from, or whither he was going*. The advertisements again shone forth, the hand-bills were again showered round, but all in vain; nor was Brank ever heard of during the remainder of the Lottery.

Poor Samuel, however, still lay in durance vile, but his innocence being tolerably established, he was, after having been robbed of seven pounds ten shillings by his master, and suffering eleven months imprisonment, discharged with a present of twenty pounds as a reward for his loss and captivity.

The

The names of Mr. Bond and Mr. Clark have been, necessarily, introduced into this history. We also have said, that the Bank took the business into their own hands; by which we mean, that the plans to apprehend our great man, were concerted, and chiefly directed by them, and that Mr. Bond undertook the carrying them into execution; the consequence of which was, our hero was always an over-match for their cunning, and Reynard ran away with the baits, without falling into the *trap*. How it happened that Mr. Clark was not applied to, and the force of his ingenuities not consulted on the occasion, we, who are perhaps a little in the *secret*, can form a tolerable shrewd guess at.

It was a business of such consequence to the good of the country, and the apprehension of so great a delinquent, would have been such a feather in the cap of the apprehender, that it was thought of too much importance to let the glory of the measure be divided—Mr. Bond, therefore, was determined to be, *aut Cæsar, aut nullus*; whilst Mr. Clark, on the other hand, would never employ his inventive faculties, or assist even with private advice, as he was not, officially,

ally, called to the councils of the *bureau publique*.

Thus, like two other very great men in *their way* too, the Right Honourable Charles James Fox, and our present Secretary of State, the Honourable Mr. William Pitt, did Mr. Bond and Mr. Clarke disagree about the reins of Government, and who should be at the *head of affairs*; not considering, that whilst their political disputes lasted, *poor old England* was *encompassed, and the waters surrounded it on every side*.

Could any thing have brought about a COALITION, and could the prince of the POLICE have joined the abilities of two such very eminent men, he would have had, not only an united, but a *firm and efficient* MINISTRY to have conducted his *councils*. OUR great man must have yielded to the sudden and rapid exertions of Mr. Bond, which, tempered by the wary, cautious, and well digested contrivances of Mr. Clark, poor Charles Price would, six years ago, have dangled out of the world a public spectacle, and the public not have been plundered of between SEVEN. AND EIGHT THOUSAND

THOUSAND POUNDS, which have already come in, in forged notes, to the Bank of England.

It was owing to this *lucky* division, that our hero reigned till the year 1786—Till then, his friend, director, and protector, had supported him, by employing the demon of discord to blow up the flame of jealousy, in the minds of two of his greatest enemies.—He, at length however, deserted his pupil, who, being left to *himself*, made at last, one effort to draw the bait, in which he failed, and like other rapacious and carnivorous vermin, was caught by the leg, as will be shewn in the sequel.

To continue the thread of our history.—During the whole of the year 1781, we hear nothing further of our hero—Having feathered his nest for that season, for Samuel's negotiations amounted to 1400*l*. he thought proper, as we naturally suppose, to lay still for a time. Besides, the narrow escape he had from being in the hands of that lady, who bears an immortal hatred to all rogues, commonly called JUSTICE, and the fire he sustained from the hand-bills, which were showered with as much heat as

ever the Governor of Gibraltar discharged his red-hot balls on the French and Spanish armada, not only drove him into *obscurity*, that is to say, compelled him to assume his own real and undisguised character of *Charles Price*; but, out of Christian charity we will suppose it, terrified him from continuing a practice, wherein his personal safety was so immediately concerned. For, to assert that the gallows was never in his thoughts, sleeping or waking, is more than, with propriety, we can assume, though we may safely suppose, he sat defiance to it, else he never would have been worthy of the renown and immortality which is the certain appendage to the actions of all great men.

In the year 1782, however, in order to make amends for that period of sloth and idleness, he arose from his lethargy with re-doubled activity; and, thereby, at once proved, that the greater the danger, the more he set defiance to a discovery.

In October of the preceding year, he took lodgings at the house of a Mr. Pryfaut, No. 17, Gresse Street, Rathbone Place, but without

out his female companion, Mrs. Poultney. This lodging also he took in the character of an old man, but in the name of WILMOTT, under pretence of having business to transact in town, which required his daily attendance, and that his *house* was in the country: all of which would have been true, if he had made use of the term *lodging*, and at Paddington; but *the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth*, never would serve any purpose of Mr. Price's from the time he could first talk, to the hour he deprived himself of all speech.

In the management of procuring his negotiator for this season, he had recourse to a different method than that he adopted in the year 1780, which was by advertisement; but he applied himself now to the more fruitful hot-bed for servants, a *Register-office*.—His application was to *Jenkinson's* at Charing-Cross, where he had sent a letter, desiring that a smart active boy might be sent to No. 17, Gresse-street, Rathbone Place, who was fit to wait upon and attend an infirm old gentleman; but particular care was to be observed that, with every other qualification,

fication, the boy must have a good character for *virtue, faith, and honesty.*

It is hardly worth our while to comment upon these three extraordinary requisites, farther than by adding, that as there is always one gentleman in every family, so in Mr. Price's, there ought to have been one person, at least, who possessed some share of those three eminent qualities in order to counterbalance the deficiency on the other side. Besides, *tel maitre tel valet*, would never have done for the service of a SOCIAL MONSTER.

It happened a little lucky for our hero, that there was such a boy, who had bestowed his twopence at the above office, in hopes of getting such a service as Mr. Price apparently required. His name was John Power, his father was a Scotch Presbyterian taylor, then lived at Mr. Thompson's, a broker, in Hemming's Row, Saint Martin's Lane, but now in Hog Lane, St. Giles's, and the boy was between ten and eleven years of age, remarkably *sharp*, and remarkably *honest*. It was not, therefore, that kind of sharpness, which distinguished our hero at those years; for it was accompanied with

with a simplicity which would never exalt him to the reputation of a great man.

The boy having waited on the old gentleman, was nicely and critically examined—His father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, aunts, uncles, and cousins, were enquired into with all the penetration that could distinguish the herald, when he is tracing the genealogy of an obscure title, in order to elevate the living issue to the peerage of the kingdom. His learning, neither, was not by any means to be neglected—The Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the ten Commandments, with the Catechism, were the objects of Mr. Price's nice enquiry. He enquired if he could read, but above all, he desired to know if he could *write*, which latter qualification he only possessed in some small degree.

It is a compliment due to that body of dissenters called Presbyterians, that they take great pains to teach their children, what those of the mother church, who are bound by a solemn vow to perform, most irreligiously neglect, *i. e.* the above *corner-stones* of the Christian religion.—It is not, therefore, to be supposed, but that young
Power

Power could repeat, what other children of his years, whose parents call themselves Christians, had never heard of; and this gave our hero such a prepossession, or rather pretended prepossession in favour of him, that he desired to see his father the next day, whom in this first interview with the son, our hero found to be a Scotchman, a taylor, and a Presbyterian.

At the time appointed, Mr. Power and his son went to Gresse-street, but in the way they met the gentleman whom they were going to wait on, hobbling down Rathbone Place. The lad pointing him out to his father, the latter stepped up to him, when Mr. Price, who, no doubt, immediately concluded the visitor to have come from Bow-street, started, and was more flagnated than if the ghost of his father had stood before him. On seeing the boy, however, he instantly recollected himself, and assumed all the dignity due to a great man, who is always offended if you speak to him in the street, especially if you happen to be a creditor. He reprimanded Mr. Power very severely for such a presumption, and desired he would walk *forward* to Gresse-

Gresse-street, and there he would speak to him.

The reason of Mr. Power's having been desired to walk *forward* is pretty evident, though the pretended reason was, inability to keep up with him.—When the parties were in the parlour, Mr. Price, who had had his cue from the boy, very religiously opened the *subject matter* of the *discourse*. He complimented the father, upon having such a son, and exhorted the son to filial duty, obedience, and reverence, for having such a father.—He impressed upon his mind the most pious regard to *truth* and *honesty*, and so vehemently exclaimed against any sort of *lie* whatsoever, that the Presbyterian took him to be exactly the reverse of what he really was, *viz.* the very best man in the world, and concluded with saying, that if the boy behaved well, was diligent, and punctual, and was never caught in a *lie*, or a *dishonest* act, he would undertake the charge of his education.—In short, he should never know *how much*, or *what* he would do for him; and, in order to give the *finishing stroke*, told the taylor, that he was not of the Church of England himself, but that he thought the
Presby-

Presbyterian principles the best calculated for the promotion of true Christianity.

It would be tedious, it would be difficult to give the whole of the *quo modo* of his working himself into the good opinion of Mr. Power.— Suffice it, that texts of Scripture were applied as *tags* to most of his sentences, and when the reader recollects our Methodist Preacher, it will by no means injure the verity of the adage, that “*the devil can quote Scripture when it answers his purpose.*”

To say that Mr. Power went away highly satisfied with his son's master, would be a language too weak to describe his feeling.—He was quite charmed, and considered our hero as the phoenix of one of the ancient prophets.—But, before his departure, Mr. Price, or Mr. Wilmott, the latter we believe *now* to be most proper, gave directions for a very handsome suit of livery to be made directly, and, to our astonishment, actually advanced the sum of one pound eleven shillings and sixpence in part, from a very large purse, apparently full, as Mr. Power, he said, was but a poor man, and could not, perhaps, afford

afford to buy the cloth without assistance.—But in advancing this money, he reminded the taylor, that he had put it in his power to be a rogue if he pleased.

He had no doubt advanced this sum, without considering he had lain himself open to be cheated, and that he repented of such a *lache*, before the taylor had time to put it in his pocket.

With this observation we beg leave to make another. As Mrs. Poulteney did not reside at this house, we may fairly conclude that our hero had always three lodgings at a time, whenever he transacted his town business. One for Mrs. Price, at Paddington, and one for Mrs. Poulteney, near the spot where he hired a lodging for himself.—The wisdom of this, if there can be wisdom in such knavery, is too glaring to need an explanation.—It was absolutely necessary for his safety, and it was a plan laid down with such art, and conduct with such sagacity that no person can so well conceive as those who suffered through the subtilty of it.

The livery, with new boots, leather breeches, &c. &c. being ready, and every thing ripe for his second plan; the first instance we have of it is as follows, and which we were favoured with by the gentleman who has obligingly authorized us to make use of his name on the occasion.

In November 1782, Mr. Spilsbury of Soho Square, had, in his absence, a card left at his house, with Mr. WILMOT engraved on it, which card was left by an old gentleman. The next evening Mr. Spilsbury received a short note to the following purpose: "That Mr. Wilmot, " would wish to converse with Mr. Spilsbury a " few minutes, having an order for his Drops, " at half past five o'clock that evening." Signed, " Gresse-street, Rathbone-place."

At the appointed time, Mr. Spilsbury waited on Mr. Wilmott, in Gresse-street, and was shewn into a parlour by a foot-boy, where he amused himself near half an hour before this Mr. Wilmott made his appearance.

On his entry, he had all the symptoms of age and infirmity. He was wrapped up in a large
 camblet

camblet great coat, he had a slouched hat on, the brim of which was large and bent downwards on each side of his head.—A piece of red flannel covered his chin, and came up on each side of his face, almost as high as his cheek bones; he had a large bush-wig on, and legs wrapped over with flannel.—Added to this, he had a pair of green spectacles on his nose, with a green silk shade hanging down from his hat, but no *patch* on his eye.

We must here inform our readers, that Mr. Spilsbury and Mr. Price knew each other perfectly well, had frequently met, at Percy-street coffee-house, Rathbone-place, and often conversed together; but Mr. Spilsbury had no idea or recollection of Mr. Price in Mr. Wilmott, and this circumstance contributes largely to his reputation of a great man.

As soon as Mr. Wilmott came into the parlour, his first observation was on his own dress; and, as it may be safely said, he never did one honest act, so it may be fairly concluded, he never told one truth in his life. For, as the necessity of lying arises from the situation of the liar,

Price was very assiduous in avoiding a state, which would lay him under the unpleasant task of telling a truth.

Conformably to this, he accounted thus for his flannel on his face. That he had exceedingly suffered in the drawing of a tooth by an unskilful dentist, and wore it in order to prevent his catching cold. He then entered very familiarly into conversation with Mr. Spilbury, extolled the merits of those drops, which needed not his praise, and recounted the great cures which he knew they had performed.

The reader will readily see the drift of this without any comment of ours. Mr. Wilmott also stiled himself a *dealer in diamonds*, and, after some short conversation, Mr. Spilbury departed, with the promise of an order in a few days. It must be also clear to every capacity, why Price did not choose to give the order immediately, for the delay was intended to strengthen Mr. Spilbury's opinion of him, and to wipe off all suspicion of fraud.

In a few days after, Mr. Spilisbury received a second note, which the duty we owe the public for their liberal encouragement of our labours, induces us to lay before them, engraved, in order to gratify their curiosity, as far as lays in our power. And in order to shew the contrast of the two hand-writings, we have also given another engraving, which we know to be his real hand, of a note he delivered to Mr. Fenwick, the governor of Tothilfields Bridewell. The reader must observe the vast difference in the writing, but on a very close inspection, it will appear from the dots made use of in each letter, that they were the writing of our hero, though some have *impudently* supposed they were the production of Mrs. Poultney.

The boy, however, did not come on the Friday, as mentioned, but that Friday week, he came with another note, in which Mr. Wilmott desired Mr. Spilisbury to send two guineas worth of the drops, and change for a 10l. Bank note. One circumstance in this note we must not omit. Mr. Wilmott desired Mr. Spilisbury to be particular in sending guineas of good weight. The Bank note appeared to be a new one, and

but lately come from the Bank; but not the least idea being entertained of its reality, change was got in the neighbourhood, and the drops sent.

Mr. Spilsbury heard nothing further for some time, till he received a card from Sir Sampson Wright desiring his attendance at Bow-street, where he gave the whole of the particulars, produced the two foregoing letters, and to his astonishment was informed of the forgery.

The note had, of course, got to the Bank, was stopped and traced back to Mr. Spilsbury, but too late; for our hero had taken sufficient care to be apprized of his danger, and when the officers from Bow-street went to pay a visit to Mr. Wilmott, they found he had prudently decamped, and again escaped the most vigilant and active pursuit that ever had been made after the most atrocious offender.

It happened, however, in the interim, that Mr. Spilsbury and Mr. Price met at Percy-street coffee-house, and there, to complete the
farce,

farce, if there can be any humour in abandoned wickedness, a scene ensued, that, perhaps, has never been equalled from the days of Shakspeare to the author of the School for Scandal.

As they were drinking their chocolate, and talking over the occurrences of the day, Mr. Spilsbury told the foregoing story to his coffee-house acquaintance, and expressed a deal of surprize at the neatness of the forgery.—Price kept crying out every now and then, “*Lack a day! good God! who could conceive such knavery could exist! What, and did the Bank refuse payment, Sir?*” staring through his spectacles with as much seeming surprize as an honest man would have done. *O yes, said Mr. Spilsbury, with some degree of acrimony; for it was on the faith of the Bank of England that I and a great many others have taken them, and they were so inimitably well done, that the nicest judges could not distinguish them. “Good God! lack a day,” said Price, “he must have been an ingenious villain?—What a complete old scoundrel!”*

Let the reader figure to himself an honest, worthy gentleman, telling a most wonderful piece
of

of knavery to the very knave himself, cautioning that knave to take care that he might not be taken in in the same way; and the author of those villainies listening with attention to, and exclaiming, with uplifted eyes and hands, against his own practices, enjoying the recital with the same degree of satisfaction the Devil did, when he stood behind the tree, whilst Eve told the story of her fall and disobedience to our forefather Adam, and then say, whether he is lost more in astonishment, laughter, or indignation! Safely may we aver, that there is hardly to be found, in the whole groupe of mankind, a wretch, callous enough to enjoy that transport and delight which then must have filled the breast of the greatest impostor breathing.

Having been favoured also by another gentleman, Mr. Nott, of Newgate-street, hosier, who was defrauded in nearly the same manner; but with circumstances that give it an air of additional surprize; we lay that, also, before our readers, in the very words in which that gentleman communicated it to us, drawn up whilst it was fresh in his memory, and with an accuracy
that

racy that portrays the closest attention to commercial concerns.

CIRCUMSTANCES relating to the forged note received of Mr. WILMOTT.

In the last week of November, 1782, Mr. Nott, received a letter signed WILMOT, dated from Gresse Street, Rathbone Place, with a card inclosed with that address, requesting Mr. Nott to acquaint Mr. Wilmott what his real nine-times dyed blue flannel was per yard, and what a green carpet covering would come to, for a room, the size of which he therein described.

Upon the receipt of this letter, Mr. Nott went to Gresse Street the next day or the day following, thinking it might be a customer worth attending to, and was let in by a smart looking lad in livery. Mr. Nott asked if Mr. Wilmott was at home, and was informed by the boy he was not, but he expected his master very soon. Mr. Nott waited some time, but Mr. Wilmott not coming in, he left the particulars of his business in writing with the lad.

A few

A few days after, Mr. Nott received another letter, desiring he would cut off sixteen yards of his real nine-times dyed blue flannel, and direct it for the Rev. Mr. Nicholas Williams, at Leicester, and his servant would call on the Friday and pay for it, and that he, Wilmott, would call on Monday about the covering for the carpet.

Accordingly, on Friday the 6th of December, between three and four o'clock in the afternoon, came the same lad that Mr. Nott had seen at Mr. Wilmott's house, with a letter in which was inclosed a note, to all appearance a Bank-note of 10l.

Mr. Nott looked at it very attentively for some time, it coming from a stranger, upon which a person who was in the shop said, *Don't you think it a good one?* Mr. Nott answered, *Yes, it has all the appearance of one, but coming from a stranger, I don't much like it.* Mr. Nott, however, not having any doubt of the goodness of it, began to give the change, but *another customer coming in*, he served him first,

first; on which the boy said, *I wish you would discharge me as I am in a great hurry.*

Mr. Nott then gave the lad eight pounds, and asked where the goods were to be sent; but the boy said he had no orders to take or give directions about them, upon which the boy went away with only the change, Mr. Nott supposing that Mr. Wilmott would call on the Monday following. The boy however had not been gone many minutes, before Mr. Nott began to be rather uneasy at changing a note for one he did not know, and expressed himself sorry to his people in the shop that the Bank was shut up, or he would go and see if it was good.

As the circumstance of the boy's not taking the goods, and Wilmotts desiring a very large room to be covered with green baize, and Mr. Nott observing that the house he was at did not appear to have a room so large in it; these two circumstances struck Mr. Nott very forcibly that there was something very odd in the affair, and determined him go to the Bank the next morning,

morning, which was Saturday the 7th of December.

Accordingly, before nine o'clock Mr. Nott was at the Bank, waiting for Mr. G—, who has been a cashier for many years, and was an acquaintance of Mr. Nott's. On his going to his place near the dial, Mr. Nott gave him the note, and said, "Sir, I have taken this note of a stranger, and I have my doubts about it. I Should be glad to know if it is a good one. Upon which Mr. G— looked at it, and said, "Yes, Mr. Nott it is a very good one, will you have the money for it?" Upon which Mr. Nott said, "No, it was not material, if the note was good that was sufficient, and came away."

Notwithstanding the above circumstances at the Bank, Mr. Nott was still of opinion that the affair bore a very odd appearance, and therefore, on the Saturday evening, he went to Gresse Street, with an excuse to know how the nine-times really dyed blue flannel was to be sent; but to his astonishment was informed that Wilmott was decamped from that house a day
or

or two before, that he had circulated a number of forged Bank-notes, to a very large amount, and that they were so well executed that the Bank had actually paid several.

Upon this information Mr. Nott went to the Bank on the Monday morning following, with the note their cashier said two days before was a good one, and desired to know if they would pay it, but was much surprised at their refusal. They then took the note, and have kept it ever since, without making Mr. Nott any acknowledgement, although it was evident that they had no idea on the preceding Saturday morning, that it was a forgery.

Wilmott was all that day, from ten o'clock in the morning, till near six or seven in the evening, circulating his forged notes.

In the account given by Mr. Nott, it appears, that whilst he was giving the change to the boy, *another person* came in. The reader must recollect, that when his first servant, Samuel, bought tickets, chances, &c. a tall genteel woman, generally

nerally came into the office, soon after him, and went out directly as he had done his business.

We would not wish our reader to suppose that this *tall genteel lady* was Mrs. Poulteney, *alias* Mrs. Hickeringill.—Be that tall genteel lady whomsoever she may, she is intitled to every share of our admiration; for she was the true friend of our hero. She was faithful to her trust, and is a damning proof to the reverse of the proposition,

That there is no honour among THIEVES.

By which this conclusion may be fairly drawn; that Price never trusted to chance, whether he was suspected or not, but placed that *other person*, as a spy upon his negotiator; so that in case of an accident, he was prepared against detection.

It is our duty also to inform our indulgent readers, that his servant attended his master, sometimes behind a hackney coach, and sometimes a *friend* of his master's, who was in men's cloaths, in the same manner, and that the boy never knew *who* that *friend* was, or *where* HE came from. HE used, however, to come at
certain

certain times, previous to which, the lad had always directions to be in readiness, and not to let the friend wait a moment.

Whoever this friend was, is a great secret, and it is as great a secret also, whether *it* was a *man* or a *woman*, and perhaps will remain so till dooms-day; though it is clear that, man or woman, *it* was a *tallish, thin person*, and rather effeminate; but should any insidious reader presume to say, it was Mrs. Poultney, we shall boldly say to him, MENTIRIS IMPUDENTIS-SIME.

But, we hope, it will not be supposed, that Mr. Spilsbury and Mr. Nott were the only two persons of whom our great man took a little advantage, during his excursions in the year 1782.

Mr. Reeves, colourman of Holborn Bridge, had the honour of a personal visit from our hero, not as Mr. Price, or Mr. Patch, or Mr. Brank, or Mr. Wilmott; but as a very reverend divine of the church of England, who wanted some excellent crayons for the purpose of drawing,

and after having examined several, took his leave, with a promise of calling, or sending in a very few days.

Accordingly, in a day or two, which is a circumstance we desire our reader, will take particular notice of, our hero was as good as his word, by sending to Mr. Reeves, by the same servant, the following note the original of which we have in our possession, and is in the same hand-writing with Mr. Spillbury's and Mr. Nott's.

Mr. Wilmot would Complitt. a Lady with Mr. Reves whole set of Coulours . wishes to be informed of the Price . including Package . . If approv'd of will send His Servt. with the Money and direction where to send them in the Country

Grefse Street

N^o. 17 —

Mr. Reeves having sent word by the servant of the price of a box of colours according to the request in the note, he received the day after by the penny. post the following order, still in

in the same hand writing, the original of which we also have.

Mr. Reeves,

Coulour Shop,

Holborn Bridge.

Mr. Wilmot desires Mr. Reeves will pack up securely a Box of 40 Coulours at 2 : 2 : 0 Price . by Friday . the Sert . shall call & pay for it hopes Mr. R. will excuse the trouble of sending the Box to the Coach . Mr. W. wishes Mr. R. would be . at home on Tuesday morning next 10 OClock. Mr. W. will call on Him

Direct the Box.

For.

Rev^d. Mr. Nichs. Williams

Grefse Street

in

N^o. 17.

Leicester

The day after, the footman called, and the box being ready packed up, a note of ten pounds was laid down, Mr. Reeves gave seven pounds eighteen shillings in change, the boy desiring they might be all good weight, taking it for a real

Bank note, and sent the box to the Saracen's Head, Friday-street, Cheapside, directed according to order.

On the day, however, that Mr. Nott had discovered the little advantage our hero had taken of *him*, Mr. Reeves had the same satisfaction; for, having changed the note at a neighbour's, who paid it to Hankeys, which latter paid it into the hands of the treasurer of the East India Company, who paid it into the Bank, it was there discovered, after it passed through various departments, to be one of the identical billets, which our great man had so often directed to the GOVERNOR AND COMPANY OF THE BANK OF ENGLAND, in the name of ABRAHAM NEWLAND, ESQUIRE.

To go through every stage of the history, for the year in which our hero commenced and concluded his annual operations, would swell the size of these memoirs to the bulk of an *Encyclopædia Francois*. We can assure our readers from the best and most indisputable authority, that on the day the boy got the counterfeit note changed at Mr. Nott's, that very boy passed SIXTY TEN POUND NOTES of the same description,

tion, amounting to no less a sum than *six hundred pounds in one day*. By this, the impossibility of going through the whole must be evident; and therefore, hope we shall stand excused for concluding this year's account with an attack on Mr. Babbs, bookseller, of Oxford-street, who has been so obliging as to favour us with the following particulars of the manner in which he planned and compleated that ingenious FRAUD.

About the beginning of December in the year 1782, our hero used frequently to call at Mr. Babbs's, in the character of Price, and buy small articles. By this means, he got, by degrees, acquainted with Mr. Babbs, as a customer, and at every one of these visits, he became well known to every body, with whom he was full of that pleasant and mild discourse, which by degrees insinuated him into their good opinion. His conversation was sometimes on politics, sometimes on air balloons, always accompanied with observations to shew that there was nothing but *hypocrisy* and *imposition* in the world.

Having thus paved his way, by securing their
full

full knowledge of him as PRICE, and perhaps, as he conceived, their confidence, he began to open his batteries on them as WILMOTT.

He called several times in a coach, in the disguise he at that time made use of, and bought some pens and paper, to the amount of three or four shillings at a time, and it turned out that the paper he bought of Mr. Babbs he used to write his letters on to those whom he determined should feel the effects of his ingenuity.—At these visits he generally changed a new guinea, expressed himself highly pleased with the civility of Mr. Babbs and his shopman, by attending him so readily at the coach door with the shop goods; for which civility he meant to give a good order to Mr. Babbs, for goods to go into the country, which order he meant to have given another bookfeller and stationer higher up in the same street, but would take it from him, because he grumbled to attend a poor, infirm, weak old man at the coach door.

Having called two or three times in this manner, and generally, when he so called, he was there the same day *in propria personâ*, i. e. as
Mr.

Mr. Charles Price, he at last sent the following letter to Mr. Babbs.

Mr. Wilmott's compliments to Mr. Babbs, begs he would be so good as to wait on him in Gresse-street, as he has an order to give to go in the country, on which he wishes to speak to Mr. Babbs, and Mr. B. shall have ready money for the same, Mr. Wilmott never running in any tradesman's books whatever, as he knows what it is.

Gresse-street, No. 17.

In consequence of this letter, Mr. Babbs not being able, then, to attend to it, sent his shopman to this Mr. Wilmott; who, when the shopman went into the parlour, was sitting with his face near the fire, close muffled up, spitting, coughing, and complaining greatly of a most violent tooth ach.

He made the shopman sit down at the further end of the room, and then in broken accents and great shortness of breath, began to tell him,
 " That he had two poor relations in the coun-
 " try, who had been foolish enough to fall in
 " love with each other, without having a shil-
 ling

“ ling in the world to support themselves or
 “ their families; but as they were a young, vir-
 “ tuous, honest couple; he had determined to
 “ assist them on their first setting off in the
 “ world, and to put them into a little business,
 “ whereby they might live happily, and *continue*
 “ to love one another.—That he was an old
 “ man himself, much stricken in years, and in
 “ his younger days had been foolish enough to
 “ fall in love also; and therefore did not think
 “ so much of it as old people generally do.
 “ That as he, thank God, did not want money,
 “ so he thought it his duty to assist them; and
 “ though he was always ready and inclined to
 “ benevolent acts, yet he would take care that
 “ what monies he advanced them should not be
 “ squandered away.—For this purpose, he in-
 “ tended to send them down a day-book, a led-
 “ ger, a posting book, and cash-book, for them
 “ to make entries in, of all goods bought and
 “ sold, with the profits thereon, and the expen-
 “ ces of house-keeping; which they should send
 “ up to him monthly, in order that he might be
 “ sure, how, and in what manner, the money he
 “ advanced them was laid out. By which means
 “ he said, he never could be deceived, and, at
 “ the

« the same time, render them every assistance in
 « his power, for it was every good Christian's
 « duty to *do unto others, as ye would others should*
 « *do unto you.*—That at the same time, as they
 « had a little family growing up, a Bible, Tes-
 « tament, and Prayer Book, with the Whole
 « Duty of Man, might not be an unacceptable
 « present. That as he was desirous of incul-
 « cating the precepts of Christianity and the
 « moral duties on their minds early, he thought
 « that the twig could not be bent too young, and
 « that it was the best way to “ *train up a child*
 « *in the way he should go, and when he was old he*
 « *would not depart from it.*” He therefore de-
 « fired Mr. Babbs would complete the order
 « directly and send it to him the next day.”

It would be an insult to the common under-
 standing of the most common reader, to ani-
 madvert a moment on so singular a specimen of
 diabolical hypocrisy—What we are most afraid
 of is, that the narrative will be read with a smile,
 and a warmth of imagination, when it ought to
 throw the human frame into an ague fit.

To proceed. The next day Mr. Wilmott sent
 his

his servant, with one of the counterfeit notes, value 10l. to Mr. Babbs, requesting the favour of him to give change for it, begging pardon for giving so much trouble, but as he was a stranger in the neighbourhood, he did not chuse to send to any place but where he was known.

Mr. Babbs not having any suspicion of a forgery, and he must have been wiser than most of the clerks and cashiers of the Bank, if he had, sent the whole change, thinking it would be unhandsome to stop for the books, as they were not yet delivered.—The next day, however, when he did send them, his shopman found Sir Sampson Wright, Mr. Bond, and their assistants, in the house, by which he not only saved his account books, but even the Bible, Testament, Prayer Book, and the Whole Duty of Man.

Strange and surprizing as it may appear, it is also equally true, that in a few days Mr. Price called upon Mr. Babbs to buy some few trifling articles, when our hero began to talk of the general report about town of forged Bank notes, of the celebrated Patch, and if Mr. Babbs actually thought there was any truth in such reports;

reports; for if there was, it would not be quite safe for tradesmen to change them. Mr. Babbs's answer may be easily guessed, but Mr. Price's sensations we hope no human being is abandoned enough to feel.

He frequently afterwards called on Mr. Babbs, in the character of Charles Price, and was as pleasant and *chatty* in his conversation, as though he was the purest of all pure characters.

But though deception and plunder were his leading passions, hardness of heart was by no means behind-hand in his composition, as the following anecdote will evince. The wretch that picks a pocket at an execution, pities the victim of his own practices; but Price could rejoice in the fate of a man of real genius, who *once* stepped out of the line of honesty, and who, caught by surprize, would have put a period to his existence at the moment of his apprehension; but who, possessing principle, had resolution, manhood, and Christianity, sufficient to stand the terror of legal dissolution. We allude to Mr. Ryland, who on the 28th of August, 1783, was executed for forging an East-India Bond.

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This man, whose fate was much lamented, having been ordered for execution, our SOCIAL MONSTER, intreated the use of a dining-room window in Oxford-street, at the house of Mr. Babbs. On that day Mr. Price attended, at the proper time, and when Mr. Ryland passed, he blasted his memory with the commission of the very forgeries which he, as Price, had committed, and as Patch had negociated.—“ There,” said he, “ goes one of the most ingenious men “ in the world, but as wicked as he is ingenious. “ He is the identical man who has done all the “ mischief in the character of Patch—he deserves his fate—and he would confess the fact, “ if he was not in hopes of a respite; which he “ would have, perhaps, obtained, had not the directors of the India House been certain that “ it was charity to the public to let him suffer.”—Contrast this with his own conduct, and comment upon his heart. Ryland died for one offence, which he confessed, Price hung himself for ten thousand, which in his last moments he impiously denied.

The above anecdote would have come in, perhaps, much better, in order of time, as we are
now

now in the year 1782, and the transaction happened in 1783; but, as it was at one and the same house, with one and the same person, we flattered ourselves, the reader would not like it the less, if it was inserted at one and the same time.

Another anecdote of him the same gentleman has furnished us with. About a year after this transaction, he met Mr. Babbs in Rathbone-place, and told him he was going to wait on him to request a favour—The latter naturally requested to know what it was, when he pulled out of his pocket book an advertisement ready drawn up, nearly to the following purpose.

W A N T E D,

“ By a Gentleman, who is independent, and
 “ whose character will bear all due enquiry, a
 “ situation as a partner in a banking-house—
 “ He has 10 or 12000*l.* ready to advance in
 “ such a plan, and it is hoped none will apply
 “ but principals, who must be persons of reputation and integrity, and whose stock is adequate
 “ to the advertiser's.—Direct by the penny post,

“ to A. B. at Mr. Babbs’s, bookseller, Oxford-
 “ street, near Rathbone-place; due attention
 “ will be paid.

The favour he had to request was, Mr. Babbs’s permission to direct to his house, who seeing no objection to such an advertisement, readily acquiesced.—One letter came which Price received, but he told Mr. Babbs *it would not do*. One thing also, we should have mentioned—he changed the A. B. to C. P. as it was a common direction, he said, and people might be induced to open his letters. What his motives were may be shrewdly suspected, but his plan certainly vanished in *fumo*.

We cannot conclude this year’s account of our great man without shewing the reader that he dealt sometimes in small wit, as well as small Bank notes.

The elder Power, the father of Price’s boy, had been in Gresse-street, twice or thrice; but whenever he came, was always directed to take his seat at the farther end of the room, in the same manner as Mr. Babbs’s shopman.—Thinking

ing he had got a very pious, devout old gentleman for a master to his son, and who had promised to make him a scholar, he thought, also, he might get a good customer, as he appeared as full of money as devotion. In one of these visits he solicited his custom, but our hero told him—" *No, no, Master Power, you may do very well to work for your SON; but you must not take MY measure.*"

And thus, having given a few of his little advantages out of the many he took of mankind in that year; and the Bank of England having by a shower of hand-bills, again driven him into obscurity, like a snail that had left its slime in every mansion where it had crawled, he retired to his shell, where we shall leave him till he thought proper to exhibit fresh proofs of that genius which induced us to compile the memoirs of this SOCIAL MONSTER..

In the summer of the year 1783, we find Mr. Price, again, most exceedingly busy, in matters not less important to his *general* reputation, than his preceding conduct for the years 1780 and 1782, had been to *the* BANK of ENGLAND in

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particular.—He thought, that by confining his talents to the attack of that one body, it was contracting the limits of his genius, which could not have full scope for an imagination, conception, and execution, so magnificently brilliant as that which adorned both his head and heart.

Besides. He considered that bending the whole body of his abilities against one enemy, which was neither competent or equal to the weight of them, was something like grinding a golden pippin under a millstone.—The juice indeed, was pleasant, but then it did not afford a draught for so capacious a soul as our hero possessed.—He was, also, something like the conqueror of the world, who cried, because there were no more worlds to conquer; so Mr. Price was never at rest, and was always upon the *veni vidi vici* as long as there was man, woman, or child breathing, on whom he could hurl the darts of his duplicity.

The following fact will explain Mr. Price better than a thousand comments.

He was very intimate with a gentleman, now
living

living in Knightsbridge, Mr. Roberts, formerly a grocer, but retired from business. The measures he took to prepare this gentleman, as a dupe to the most consummate piece of knavery, were as follow :

Mr. Price had for a long time passed as a stock-broker ; and Mr. Roberts had always entertained that opinion of him. To secure his good opinion of his independent situation in life, Mr. Price, frequently used to request the favour of Mr. Roberts to take a Bank-note or two into the city, and get them changed into small ones. In this he had a two-fold plot. First, he made himself a man of consequence with Mr. Roberts, and thereby laid him open to his future scheme ; secondly, the identical notes which Mr. Roberts brought him back, served as copies for Price to engrave his counterfeit ones from. By this manœuvre Price gratified his highest stretch of dissimulation—for thereby his *friend* became a double dupe.

Matters went on in this mode of friendship, till our hero found Mr. Roberts ready to fall a sacrifice to any plan he might propose ; who
being

being thus ripened for the purpose, Price informed his friend, " That he was intimately
 " acquainted with an old gentleman, whose
 " name was BOND, who lived in Union Court,
 " Leather Lane, Holborn, and who was exceedingly rich, as well in landed as in personal estates; had been a very eminent broker in the alley, but had long retired. That his monies in the funds were immense, and that the only relation he had in the world, was one sister, to whom he intended to bequeath the best part of his property—this sister was near fifty years of age, had never been married, was determined never to marry, and that it was impossible the old gentleman could live long, as he was very old, very infirm, and almost incapable of going out of doors."

The reader, by this time, will probably begin to recollect *Mr. Patch* or *Mr. Wilmott*, under this description, and, in fact, it meant no other. What could induce Mr. Price, who piled as many schemes upon schemes as there were stones in the tower of Babel, to fix on so singular a name, may perhaps be collected, if we consider that it was most probable, the name of

Bond,

Bond, sleeping or waking, was always uppermost in his thoughts. That as he well knew that Mr. Bond of Bow-street, had been yearly upon the watch for him, the name tripped off his tongue as the involuntary impulse of conscious guilt.

This old gentleman, as Price represented to his friend, had often asked him to become his executor; had also besought him to recommend another person, in whose fidelity, character, and integrity, this Mr. Bond could repose an entire confidence, and that he would make it well worth their while, if they would jointly, undertake so friendly and solemn an office.—

“Now,” said Mr. Price to Mr. Roberts, “here is an opportunity for us to make a considerable sum in a short time, and, in all probability, a very capital fortune in a few years; for the sister being determined never to marry, and having no relations in the world, there is no doubt but she will leave us the whole of the estate, especially as I now stand upon such good terms with her brother, that after his decease, she will become totally dependent upon us.—I shall see Mr. Bond to-day,

“ day, and if you will join in the trust, the
 “ will shall be immediately made.”

To this proposal Mr. Roberts readily consented, and we may venture to say without much hesitation.—In the evening, Price, who pretended he had been in the city, returned to Mr. Roberts and told him that he had seen Mr. Bond, who expressed great happiness and easiness of mind on such a recommendation, and desired to see him the next day. Accordingly, our hero appointed to meet him at twelve o'clock at Mr. Bond's, and in a short time after the appointed hour, Mr Roberts knocked at the door.—He was shewn up stairs by a lady, whom Mr. Roberts conceived to have been the sister; but whom we believe was not quite so nearly related.—This lady, introduced him to Mr. Bond, seated in a great chair, his legs laid in another, his head was covered with a night-cap, and a large flannel covered the lower part of his face.

We leave the imagination to supply any further description. The poor, infirm, weak, debilitated old gentleman, regretted the absence of his

his ever dear friend Mr. Price, who was the most worthy man in the world, and he rang a peal on his friendship, honour, honesty, integrity, &c &c. accompanied with emaciated coughs—Was obliged to go to the city coffee-house—a punctual man—never failed an appointment—it was the soul of business; and then he told Mr. Roberts that his dear friend desired to meet him there exactly at one o'clock—He approved highly of Mr. Price's recommendation, and was now happy in his mind—It wanted but a quarter to one he believed, and he hoped Mr. Roberts would not fail, as his dear friend was exact indeed. The usual compliments passed, the pretended unmarried sister conducted Mr. Roberts to the door, who posted away to the city coffee-house, and left old Master Bond, the rich broker, who was in reality no other than Mr. Price, and this sister, to laugh at Mr. Roberts's credulity. The plot began now to thicken, for Mr. Roberts had not been five minutes in the coffee-house before he was joined by his friend Price, to whom he recapitulated what had passed at the old broker's, and as soon as Price had dispatched some pretended business, he proposed calling on Mr. Bond. This was readily acquiesced in by Mr. Roberts,

Roberts, and away they drove to Leather Lane; but when they came there, they were informed by the lady that her brother was just gone out in a coach on an airing to Highgate.

In short, he carried on the comedy so completely for several days, during which time Mr. Roberts had twice or thrice seen the old gentleman, though never in the company of his friend Price, that the will was made; and on the strength of the joint executorship, Mr. Roberts was swindled out of very near 1000*l.* in cash, and bonds to the amount of 200*l.* more, which fraud was never discovered, till Mr. Price's apprehension, after which Mr. Roberts got up his bonds from Mrs. Price, to whom he gave a note for the amount, and which he is determined never to pay one single farthing of.

How credulous Mr. Roberts may appear to people who imagine themselves wiser, or however extravagant the tale may tell, we vouch its authenticity.

But one in a family was, now, considered by our great man as too insignificant an instance of his dexterity, in those kind of little advantages,

advantages, which has distinguished him for near fifty years; and therefore, he determined that Mr. Roberts's brother, a grocer also, who lately lived in Oxford Street, but retired too from business, should experience the effects of his ingenuity. He had often been there as Mr. Price, had bought a variety of things, and was perfectly well known. One day he took the opportunity of calling there, in a hackney coach, disguised as an old man, and bought some few things. In a day or two afterwards he repeated it, and on a third day, when he knew Mr. Roberts was from home, he came again, his face so painted that he seemed perfectly in a yellow jaundice. The shopman, who came from Manchester, and to whom he was full of complaints, told him that he had a receipt for that disorder, wrote by a very eminent physician of that place, which had cured his father of it, and offered him the prescription. Price accepted it, and promised that, if it succeeded, he would very liberally reward him for his civility.

Having got the receipt, away he drove, and in a few days called again, when he appeared perfectly free from the complaint, and ac-

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knownedged his great obligations to the shopman, to whom, after he had expatiated on his own substance, the short time he had to live in the world, and the few relations he had to leave any thing to, he made a present of a 10l. Bank note.

The reader need not be told it was a counterfeit one, but at the same time he said, that he wanted cash for another, which was a 50l. and Mr. Roberts not being in the way, the shopman stepped over to an opposite tradesman, Mr. J. and got change for it. The next day, having watched Mr. Roberts out, Price called again, and intreated the lad to get five other 50l. notes changed for small ones; who, telling him his master was not in the way, Price begged he would take them to his master's banker, and there get them changed. This request the lad complied with. The bankers, Harley, Burchall, and Co. complied with Mr. Roberts's supposed request, changed them without suspicion, and the small notes were the same day given to Mr. Price.

It was not long before these notes got to the
Bank,

Bank, and of course, were stopped. Enquiry took place; they were traced to the banker's, and from thence to Mr. Roberts's. The lad was interrogated, and he told his story, sufficiently enough, indeed, for the Solicitor of the Bank to know he had been imposed on by *Mr. Patch*, or rather Mr. Wilmott. The Bank refusing to take them, the Banker had recourse to Mr. Roberts, who likewise refused to refund the 250*l*. The consequence was, an action was brought against Mr. Roberts by the Bankers; it was tried in the Court of Common Pleas, in the City, before Lord Loughborough, and the plaintiffs obtained a verdict.—Thus were the two Mr. Roberts robbed by their old acquaintance Price.

Had the case rested here, it might not, perhaps, have been more striking than the general line of his conduct. But, in this business, Price out-heroded Herod; for Mr. Roberts having communicated the story to him, he offered him all the assistance in his power, and was actually a principal agent in the suit. He not only advised, but was subpæned and attended the trial, and was, of all others, the most active in procuring

curing witnesses on the part of the defendant, which business cost Mr. Roberts an additional 100l.

But, though the Spring and Summer had engrossed his attention to private plunder, yet, in the Autumn he returned to the favourite amusement—his depredations on the Bank of England.

For this purpose we again trace him in the name of HENRY SCHUTZ, at Mr. Connolly's, a shoe and patten warehouse in Swallow-street, Oxford-street. It is remarkable, likewise, that during the whole routine of his amusements, he never once quitted that quarter.

The first stroke that season, we find to have been struck on Monday the 6th of October, when he sent by a waiter, from one of the coffee-houses, near the 'Change, fourteen counterfeit notes of fifty pounds each, with directions to get them changed for seven notes of one hundred pounds each, which latter were actually delivered to the waiter, in lieu of the former, and came safe into the hands of our hero.

The

The peculiar time of his striking this severe blow, adds still more to his reputation as a great man—It proves that he knew how to *take time by the forelock*; and also that he entertained a very high opinion of the doctrine of *striking whilst the iron is hot*.—But to *more matter with less words*.

The 6th of October was the day, which gave such infinite satisfaction to all ranks of people, *i. e.* who delight in fine fights, by the proclamation of peace with France and Spain.—During this ceremony at the 'Change, when all eyes and hands were busy, and every attention fixed, either in conversation or reflection, he dispatched the above emissary to the Bank, where, in the general hurry of the moment, the notes were changed without hesitation, though not without inspection.

This circumstance proves Mr. Price a most able politician; for whilst all Europe was at peace, he was levying hostilities on his great enemy, the Bank of England, and at a moment too, when he thought it most propable that they might be taken by surprize.—A stroke of generalship, not unworthy the attention of those

whose humane business it is, by the laws of arms and honour, to lay waste kingdoms, and reduce the inhabitants thereof to misery and ruin.

We are in possession also of another effort of his genius this season, to levy a contribution on a gentleman of fortune and character, Mr. —, of Lincoln's Inn Fields, a Portuguese Jew—This gentleman had advertised a quantity of very valuable diamonds for sale, and Mr. Shcutz, whom the reader may recollect in the character of Mr. Johnson at Amsterdam, and thereby possessing a knowledge of that article, wrote to Mr. — a letter in his usual disguised hand, requesting that gentleman to wait on him with them, pleading his age and infirmity as an excuse for not attending in person.

This gentleman, however, not being in the style of a tradesman, whose duty it is, as well as business, to attend the commands of his customers, declined the honour of attending our great man, and sent word back that Mr. Shcutz might wait upon him and see the diamonds if he pleased.

Thought

Though this answer, perhaps, a little disconcerted our hero, with regard to the outline of his general mode of manœuvring, yet it opened a door of communication to the execution of his particular project; and consequently, he took that advantage of it which no great general ever neglects, viz. drawing his lines of circumvallation. He, therefore, waited on Mr. — in a hackney coach, but chose to see the diamonds without getting out of it, apologizing for the trouble on account of the difficulty he had to get in and out of a coach.

It may not be amiss here to state in what manner he was disguised, at the time of his lodging at Mr. Conolly's, in Swallow-street. All the disguise of the lower part of his person was preserved; but he had changed his surtout into a *black* camblet one, which gave him a clerical appearance. His head was ornamented with a wig, such as the center figure of the frontispiece describes; the cape of the surtout was buttoned up over his chin, and the whole face painted so as to give him the appearance of a person violently afflicted with the yellow jaundice—His accent and broken speech were preserved, he always walked leaning on his cane, exceedingly feeble,

feeble, and his minutely practice was to turn sharp round, and survey every side and behind him, no doubt to watch if he was followed or even suspected.

It was in this disguise he waited on Mr. —, and having seen the diamonds, which we are informed were valued at near 5000*l.* a bargain was struck. Our diamond merchant then pretended he was going into the City to sell Stock, and would call the next day and pay for the diamonds in Bank notes, which was settled to have been between the hours of twelve and one.

By the interposition, however, of that power, which sometimes defeats the deepest of the human designs; or, perhaps, by the desertion of that genius which set all our hero's projects afloat, Mr. Schutz was now counteracted.—On that day, that very day, which he was to have waited on Mr. —, Sir Sampson Wright, Messrs. Acton, Bond, &c. &c. &c. waited on Mr. Schutz, They unkennelled, but they could not earth the fox, and thus he a third time ran to cover. It is a singular fact too that a *Chairman* gave the information, and that Mr. John Shallard and Mr. John Atkins, two of the Bow-street officers,

officers, were left in waiting several days at Mr. Connoley's, but old reynard never returned.

This circumstance naturally leads us to a pursuit of him much farther than any we have yet heard of. Mr. Pearson, one of his Majesty's messengers, was, in this year, going with an express to Lord North, who was then either at Hythe, or Dover. When he came to Dartford, he called for a chaise immediately, but the waiter gave him to understand, that there was only one pair of horses at home, and those an elderly gentleman, who was going forward, had already bespoke.

Mr. Pearson insisting on having those horses, as he was on his Majesty's service, and shewing the badge of his expedition, the silver greyhound, the waiter went to the old gentleman, told him the circumstance, and with many apologies added, that the King's messenger must have the horses.

The old gentleman complained very much of this usage, said he was in as great a hurry as his Majesty's messenger, and that his business was, perhaps, much more important. Whoever this old

old gentleman was, he certainly, then, spoke truth, which our hero never did, except for a knavish purpose. It was agreed, however, between the two, as a matter of favour and accommodation on the part of Mr. Pearson, that the old gentleman should accompany him to the next stage, and accordingly they rode together as far as Sittingbourne, which is two stages from Dartford; but in the way, a circumstance happened that gave no little surprize to Mr. Pearson.

This old gentleman had a green tin cannister with him, such as holds sugar in private families, and are fastened with padlocks, which cannister was very heavy, and Mr. Pearson observed, that his companion never suffered an hostler or waiter to touch it. By the roughness of the road, however, and the jolting of the chaise, between Rochester and Sittingbourne, the padlock gave way, and out tumbled a large quantity of guineas, which circumstance rather a little surprized him.

Having parted at Sittingbourne, Mr. Pearson went on his business, which having dispatched, next day he returned to town. Reading the advertisement from the Bank of Eng-

land

land respecting Mr. Schutz, which was again most copiously distributed in hand-bills on his being routed from Swallow-street, it struck Mr. Pearson, that his companion must have been the identical person so advertised.—He acquainted the Secretary of State of it, who sent him to Sir Sampson Wright, who sent him to Mr. Acton, and who, with the boy that Mr. Schutz had had in Swallow-street, immediately set off, and traced the supposed delinquent to Calais, having first obtained a credential from the Secretary of State, to the Minister of the Court of France, stating the dangerous forgeries committed on the Bank of England, and requesting the offender might be delivered up, if found in France.

On Mr. Acton's arrival at Calais, he immediately waited on the Lieutenant de Police and delivered the Secretary of State's letter, which was directly dispatched to Paris.

The circumstance, however, which we are now going to relate, though we do not positively assert it to be a fact; yet, this we declare, that we have it from a gentleman, whose veracity

city cannot be questioned, therefore we entertain no doubt of its truth, and is as follows.

On the day after Mr. Acton's arrival at Calais, having already traced the gentleman whom he was in search of, and to apprehend whom he was only waiting for the French minister's answer, he met *ipso facto*, no less a gentleman than Mr. Price; who no doubt, knowing Mr. Acton, accosted, and very civilly enquired his business at Calais.—Mr. Acton having given him a slight hint of the business, Mr. Price offered his services, and promised to keep a strict eye on the old gentleman.

The permission for apprehension arriving in two or three days, the man, suspected to have been the long-wished-for Master Patch, was taken and brought before the Lieutenant of the police; before whom it unfortunately turned out, that it was a person who had ran away from the King's custom-house at Perth in Scotland, for embezzling his Majesty's stores, which he had converted into ready money, had come to London, from thence, in his way to Dover, and which accounted for the gold in the green cannister, part of which story was told at the time in all the English papers.

But

But the defence of this gentleman, when under examination before the Lieutenant de Police, was as ingenious as that of ours when in custody at Ostend.—He declared that he was an agent in the service of America and Holland, employed to buy stores for their use; and that having been detected, he was compelled to make a precipitate retreat from Edinburgh.

As Mr. Acton had no request for this man to be delivered up, and if he had, we are certain it would not have been complied with; and as the boy which Mr. Acton took with him, knew nothing of him, he was of course discharged.—A circumstance which must have afforded an exceeding disappointment to Mr. Acton, and the highest diversion and exultation to our hero, as he had ocular demonstration that not only his great enemies were on a wrong scent; but that he was even free from all manner of suspicion. Had he, therefore, ever read Virgil, well might he have exclaimed,

*Per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum
Tendimus.*

This was the exultation of that hero, when
B b
after

after all his tempests, storms, and shipwrecks, he landed safely on the Latium Coast.

To readers, who, like our great man, had never had an opportunity of reading Virgil, (we hope they will not be offended with the comparison) but, perhaps, are very intimately acquainted with an author of much greater reputation, our *immortal* SHAKESPEARE, we may stand excused for endeavouring to *Anglicise* the above quotation.—They may recollect the gradations of villainy in King Richard, and his exclamation on the accomplishment,

Thus far we sail before the wind.

But when they have brought to their memory, the determined and settled wicked purposes of that royal and poetical monster, in another subsequent line,

Thus BAD begins, but WORSE remains behind,

They may not, perhaps, think either or both of those lines at all inapplicable to our REAL SOCIAL MONSTER.—With one observation only, we shall close this short digression.—The reader must by no means conceive, that the latter line has any analogy to the LITTLE ÆNEAS of Virgil, because his pursuits were quite of a different texture;

texture; but that, though the former may have some affinity, yet, coupled together, they are the sole and exclusive property of OUR GREAT CHARLES PRICE.

To proceed. Another circumstance also, seems very materially to confirm the former information. — We have it from indisputable authority likewise, that a respectable gentleman, in a respectable office in the Bank of England, has recently declared,

THAT THE BANK HAD PAID MONEY TO CHARLES PRICE TO APPREHEND HIMSELF;

Putting, therefore, *this, that, and the other together*, it is not at all unlikely, that the solicitor of the Bank of England did see our great man at Calais, and that he did reward him for his assiduity in *keeping his eye* on the old gentleman, the embezzler of his Majesty's stores.

We have thought proper to treat the reader with these anecdotes in preference to those little advantages which he took in the course of this year, with those tradesmen, into whose good graces he had, for a series of years, so artfully

and so effectually insinuated himself. — The reader, we hope, will excuse us the rather as those anecdotes have novelty in them, and because, we are afraid we must be under the necessity of introducing a few more little advantages in the course of the subsequent year. Suffice it therefore to say, that Mr. — who kept a lace shop, and Mr. Donaldson, bookseller, in St. Paul's Church Yard, with some others, who have not authorized us to make use of their names, were sufferers this year ; but with notes of double the sum to those of any preceding season in which our hero had commenced his Bank of England campaign. We shall take the liberty, therefore, of concluding this year's account with an exploit equally novel, equally singular, and equally effective.

Having found out a fit object to practice his deceptions on, in the person of Mr. E—, who was an eminent merchant in the city ; and having traced his connections at Amsterdam, to even obtaining a letter, which came from a merchant there to Mr. E—, he began his attack on that gentleman as follows :

He accosted him on change, in another disguised

guised character, and told him, that he had received a letter from a correspondent of theirs, at Amsterdam, whose name he mentioned, which informed him, that a person of the name of Trevors, who frequented the Change, had defrauded the Dutch merchant out of a 1000l. and that the latter requested Mr. E.'s assistance, in the recovery of the whole, or any part of it he could get.

Having thus opened the business, he then produced the letter to Mr. E—, who having read it, did not entertain the least suspicion, but what it was the hand-writing of his Amsterdam correspondent.—He therefore, not only gave credit to the writing, and implicitly believed every word of the story, which our ingenious hero had trumped up, more effectually to carry his plan into execution; but offered his assistance, most readily, in any plan that might be pursued to favour his Dutch friend.

As he had thus far paved the way with success, he then began to advise Mr. E— how to manage the matter.—“To-morrow,” said our great man, “most likely, he will be upon “Change.—He always frequents the Dutch

“ Walk, and is dressed in a red surtout, with a
 “ white wig. He has square-toed shoes, with
 “ little buckles, and all the remainder of his
 “ dress is so plain, that it is nearly in the stile of
 “ a quaker’s.—Your best way will be to accost
 “ him, get into conversation with him, intro-
 “ duce the mercantile affairs of Amsterdam;
 “ and by pretending that he can be of service
 “ to you, invite him home to dine with you.—
 “ You may then break the business, show him
 “ the letter, and inform him, that unless he re-
 “ funds the whole, or part of the money, im-
 “ mediately, you will expose the matter to the
 “ merchants. By this means, I don’t doubt, but
 “ you may obtain a good part of the property
 “ back again, as he is rich, and has always cash
 “ or notes about him, and would rather pay
 “ than be exposed.”

Mr. E— highly approved of this plan, and
 after some few ceremonies they parted, he being
 much pleased with an opportunity of doing,
 as he thought, such an essential service to his
 Dutch friend ; but particularly with the means
 by which he was to accomplish it. The natu-
 ral bent of our inclinations to outwit each other,
 naturally

naturally accounts for such extravagant simplicity.

The next day our hero appeared on the Dutch walk, and in the dress he had so minutely described the day before. Mr. E— followed the advice given him, the result of which was, an invitation to dinner, and an acceptance on the part of our great man.—When the cloth was removed, Mr. E— gave the signal to his Lady and family to retire, for he had previously informed them of the business, and then he began to open to Mr. Trevors, in as delicate a manner as he could, the purpose of the invitation.

Our hero acknowledged the charge, in part, affected great remorse, declared his intention was to pay, begged he might not be exposed on 'Change, and offered to pay 500l. down, in case Mr. E. would bury the matter in oblivion. This being readily promised on Mr. E.'s part, Mr. Trevors then produced a 1000l. note, which he said, he would give to Mr. E. if the latter would give him the other moiety.—Not having sufficient cash and notes in the house, Mr. Trevors proposed a draft upon Mr. E.'s Banker,

Banker, which being given, after some short time our hero took his leave, rejoicing no less at the success of his artifice, than Mr. E. did at his supposed luck in favour of his Amsterdam correspondent.

The next morning, however, his pleasure was considerably abated, for the note having been found a forged one, he ran to his Banker's to stop payment; but, unfortunately, too late, for a porter, who seemed to have been followed by a tall, thin *woman*, into the banking-house, had obtained notes for the draft four hours before Mr. E.'s application to stop payment.

We have thus, as briefly as the nature of it would allow, told this anecdote of our great man. Should the reader be surprized at the credulity of Mr. E—, let him reflect a moment on the impositions, which in all probability may have been practised on himself, and, perhaps, his surprize will lessen. We have also given the fact without a comment, in order to let the reader's imagination have full scope for reflection.—If it guards *him* against imposition, we have fulfilled our intentions.

We

We come now to the fifth year of our hero's history respecting his attacks on the Bank of England.—As his former depredations had caused such a consternation among the Directors, and his hair-breadth escapes had hitherto been successful, but often extremely and critically dangerous, he now chose a still more cautious mode of continuing his artifices.

He had previously removed Mrs. Price from Charlotte-Row, Liffon-Green, to St. George's-Row, which is between Tyburn and Kensington Gravel Pits, and overlooks Hyde-Park.—Mrs. Hickeringill was in a house, in the name of ANN POLTON, at No. 3, on the Terrace, Tottenham Court Road. It is remarkable too, that the new buildings was a spot that he never quitted, during his attacks on the Bank, save his lodgings at Mr. Connolly's, in Swallow-street, which is close by, so that this quarter was always the scene of his *great* actions.

Having prepared every thing in readiness for his campaign, he opened his trenches by the following advertisement:

WANTED,

W A N T E D,

“ Two young men, who have been used to
 “ the linen and drapery business—They must be
 “ honest and sober, and their character bear
 “ every enquiry.—Good wages will be given,
 “ provided they are approved of.—Apply to
 “ X. Y. Z. at Slaughter’s Coffee-house, St.
 “ Martin’s-lane.”

Among the numerous young men who applied, two had the misfortune to be selected as his agents; but the injury which possibly it might do them to expose their names to the public, prevails on us to keep them secret, and we hope we shall stand excused for it by our generous and liberal minded readers.

To these young men Mr. POLTON, for such was now our hero’s name, pretended he was a factor for a considerable house abroad, for the purpose of purchasing and exporting Irish linens, &c. &c.—He then sent them out to different shops to purchase those articles, with his forged notes, and they obeyed his directions, till this scheme was also blown up.

The

The reader will readily conceive, without its being repeated, that these lads were followed by the usual emissary, that our hero was still disguised; so that it was impossible he should be ever taken.

It would, likewise, be superfluous to recite the individual advantages he took this year, of different tradesmen; as they were all conducted on the identical plan he had before pursued, and which is already pretty fully related, viz. introductory letters, conversations as Mr. Price and Mr. Polton, and the scheme wound up by the purchase which his two agents made of linens, &c. &c.

We must observe, however, that from tens, twenties, and thirties, he had this year changed his plan to forties and fifties, even up to a hundred and two hundred pounds forged Bank notes; so that instead of intitling them *little*, we may now fairly stile them *great* advantages.

Mr. Woolerton, however, linen draper, of Oxford-street, and Mr. Robinson, linen draper, at Seven Dials, near Monmouth-street (which
was

was close to the spot where our hero honoured the air with his first breath) with some other gentlemen, in the same branch, were fortunate enough to recover their property back; though they were no little sufferers by the loss of the balance, which was always tolerably considerable, half and half. Suffice it that our hero was again closely pursued by the Bank and Bow-street gentlemen; and so close, that he had no time to remove the property of several tradesmen whom he had defrauded.

Thus again discovered, he and his female agent were again routed from their quarters by the following advertisement:

PUBLIC-OFFICE, BOW-STREET.

Wednesday, June 16th, 1784.

A F E L O N Y.

“ Whereas a woman answering the following
 “ description, stands charged with felony; who-
 “ ever will apprehend her, and bring her before
 “ Sir Sampson Wright, at the above Office,
 “ shall receive two hundred pounds reward up-
 “ on her commitment.

The

" The said woman lately lived in a house,
 " No. 3, on the Terrace, Tottenham-Court-
 " Road, by the name of ANN POLTON: She
 " then was dressed in a black silk gown, black
 " cloak, and a black bonnet; she appears, or
 " affects to be, very old and decrepid, though
 " there is strong reason to believe that it is fic-
 " titious: She is rather above the middle size,
 " thin face, and when she hired the above house,
 " and until Monday last, usually wore cloaths
 " as above described, but on that day was dressed
 " in a dark blue striped linen or cotton gown, black
 " bonnet and cloak, a black handkerchief tied
 " round her neck, a black patch on her chin,
 " and another on her right cheek, and had a
 " bundle tied in a white handkerchief, light co-
 " loured hair in loose curls, without powder.
 " She has lately been seen as affecting a despond-
 " ing situation, in the fields in the above neigh-
 " bourhood. She is connected with a man who
 " has appeared very aged and infirm, but not-
 " withstanding, hath been observed to walk very
 " well when he supposed he was noticed.

" The man appears to be aged, about five
 " feet seven or eight inches high, generally
 " wearing

" wearing a morning gown, with a cap over his
 " face, and a large hat flapped ; walks decrepid,
 " with a stick, as if infirm, and wears specta-
 " cles.—Has several times walked down to the
 " stables adjacent to the terrace, and is the same
 " person frequently before advertised, under dif-
 " ferent descriptions.

" It is earnestly requested that all house-
 " keepers in the several streets, &c. between
 " the Middlesex Hospital and the out build-
 " ings towards Marybone, will give particular
 " attention to this advertisement."

The reader will see, by the above advertise-
 ment, that it was aimed more at our heroine, than
 our hero ; but we are afraid, and must lament,
 that the majority of her friendly assistances to
 Mr. Price, will be for ever buried in oblivion ;
 unless the above lady will condescend, like ano-
 ther frail one, to publish *her* history, and furnish
 the world with "*An Apology for the Life of Miss*
 "*Catherine Hickeringill*," which if she does,
 there is no doubt but it will be read by every
 person of *taste* and *fashion* throughout the coun-
 try,

try, and the publisher pocket the profits of the sale of TWENTY editions at least.

We ought not to let slip a circumstance that had nearly brought our hero to his *home*, i. e. to take up his lodging with Mr. Fenwick, the governor of Tothilfields Bridewell, a little before his time.

The preceding advertisement mentions his having several times *walked down to the stables adjacent to the Terrace*.—Indeed, he used every morning, to take a pleasure in viewing a stable lad dress a horse, which was very vicious and unruly when he was scraped down with the curry-comb, and would bite and kick most furiously, for which he was as furiously cudgelled with a broom-stick.—Mr. Polton used to delight in this, and no doubt, from his natural propensity to see *all* God Almighty's creatures, man and beast, indiscriminately, teased and tormented.

Whilst this operation was performing, he would lean on his ivory-headed cane, and chuckle and grin most confoundedly, but never speak a word, keeping, at the same time, a most special

look out. When one of the officers from Bow-street was delivering the hand-bills, which were copies of the above advertisement, he heard a stable-boy suddenly and vehemently, on the reading the bill, exclaim "*If this is not my old man, I'll be D——D!*" Entering, therefore, into conversation, our hero was traced to some gardens, the bottom of Tottenham-Court Road, called the Adam and Eve, which he was fond of frequenting, and was there missed by a minute; for whilst the officer went in at one door our great man stepped out at the other.

We are arrived, at last, to that period of time, when every man, who quits the path of virtue and honesty, must fall a sacrifice to his own schemes, however deep and well planned they may have been.—Not that there was ever such a time with our great man—he never *quitted* those paths, because he had never walked in them—his road from his *cradle* to his *grave*, was the road of vice and dishonesty, of fraud, rapine, and plunder, of dissimulation and hypocrisy.—He was born to *bite mankind*, and he made the best use of those weapons with which nature, in an
angry

angry mood, had furnished her SOCIAL MONSTER.

His various deceptions in the circulation of forged notes, now becoming highly dangerous, he turned his thoughts to a new species, equally artful, and for a time equally successful.

Still in disguise, he went to the coffee-houses about 'Change—got a boy to take 10l. to the Bank, giving him directions to the teller, who gives the customary ticket to the cashier who pays. With this ticket the lad had orders, instead of pursuing the teller's direction, to the cashier, as is usual, when out of sight of the teller, to turn round another way, and return to the coffee-house. There he used to alter the ticket from 10l. to 100l. by adding an O, or a I, to any other sum where the addition was easy and might puzzle the teller, as from 10l. to 100l. or from 50l. to 150l. &c. and then send it by another hand, to the cashier, who paid it unsuspectingly.

This scheme was his last, and he practised it frequently with success, till having received a

Bank note, which he, *wisely*, passed at Mr. Aldus's, a pawn-broker, in *Berwick-street*, which note was one that had been given in consequence of the forged ticket on the cashier, he was there apprehended.

The particular circumstances which led at last to detect him, were as follow:

This note had many indorsements, and Price having disguised several of them, by additions to, and trifling alterations of the names, in the same manner as was lately detected in a certain ASSEMBLY ROOM in Westminster; and his friend, the *old* GENTLEMAN, whom we have already once or twice mentioned, not being then at his elbow, at that time probably engaged in some other equally honourable employ, Mr. Price left one indorsement standing entire. This led to Mr. Aldus's, who knew him by the name of POWEL, where he came two or three times a week, and pledged things of value, but whose residence Mr. Aldus could never find out, notwithstanding he caused him to be frequently followed, on account of the great singularity of his character, although undisguised.

The

The principal reason, nevertheless, was, on account of the Pawnbrokers Act, then in agitation, and Mr. Aldus having some reason to apprehend his design might have been to have brought *qui tam* actions for usurious interest; but he could never trace him home, as his spy always lost him in or about Portland-street, where Mrs. Price, at that time lived, at Mr. Bailey's, a pastry cook, or in a Meuse in Tottenham-street, where Mrs. Poulteney lived in the name of TAYLOR, the private door to which house was so intricate, that he could enter it before it was possible for the follower to get up to the Meuse gate.

On this really important discovery, Mr. Winter, (for no doubt was entertained that the forger of the teller's tickets was the notorious OLD PATCH) was immediately for pushing away to those places in pursuit of, and to make the strictest enquiry, which warm and honest zeal in the service of the Bank would have proved as fatal as any of the schemes hitherto planned, although as multitudinous as the motes in the Sun's beams. But Mr. Clark, (Mr. Bond being then a magistrate) who understood TRAP much better than Mr. Winter, advised every
 thing

thing to remain quiet, and on this ground of argument, that where the forger came two or three times a week, and was still unsuspected, there he would come again; and besides, as there was every reason to imagine that he was paving the way to make Mr. Aldus the dupe of some very noble exploit, our hero's great soul setting at defiance the proverb, that

Old birds are not to be caught with chaff.

As Mr. Clark's advice was adhered to, an officer whose name was Thomas Ting, was placed at Mr. Aldus's in waiting. The bird did come, and he fell into the trap, which was on the fatal fourteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-six—A day, that ought to be blotted out of the calendar, and to be a day of mourning for Prigs of all denominations, though they, we can scarcely call them GENTLEMEN, the Bank of England, had the hardness of heart to sing TE DEUM on the melancholy occasion.

When the dreadful signal was given, Mr. Ting came round into the little box, where our
hero

hero most undauntedly stood, and told him, he wanted to speak with him. Mr. Powel expressed his surprize, desired to know who he was, and his business; but Mr. Ting replied, he would tell him if he would step into Mr. Aldus's parlour; to which place, as we are afraid, our hero went with all the horrors of hell on his conscience.

When in the parlour he soon resumed his natural violence, he asked the officer if he wanted to rob him, and bestowed some few epithets on him; but when Mr. Ting told him, that he had orders to detain him till some person came from Bow-street, and that in the mean time he must be searched, not the storm that wrecked the Haleswell Indiaman raged fiercer or more dreadful than our great man. — His passion, however, soon subsided, and he submitted with a complacency that did honour to his affability — Nay, he pulled out Bank notes to the amount of 115l. with some few guineas; but when Mr. Ting found a parcel of fine paper called *fan paper*, in his pocket, and asked, what that was for? he, without hesitation, replied, “ *He had bought it to make his children AIR BALLOONS.* ” — This quick

quick reply proves him to have been really a great man, and in full possession of that quality, necessary to all great men, viz. presence of mind.

He declared, however, that this proceeding was MIGHTY ODD, that he would bring action upon action against his detainer, and began to abuse Mr. Aldus; but when Mr. Clark came in, who knew him immediately, and said, "How do you do, Mr. PRICE?"

*A sudden damp struck to his heart, (and)
Cold tremblings seized his limbs.*

He begged he might be permitted to go to his wife, who he said was of a delicate constitution, and acquaint her of the business, as from another mouth it might have a dangerous effect on her; nay, he actually offered Mr. Ting the hundred and fifteen pounds as a security for his return! This, however, for many weighty reasons, not being possible to be complied with, Mr. Aldus undertook the disagreeable task, whilst our great man was conducted by Mr. Ting, arm in arm, to that house, where many a great man before
him

him had been conducted, and never to return—we hardly need say, it was the late Sir J. Fielding's, now Sir S. Wrights, in the way to which he often offered the above 115l. and declared, upon his honour, he would return again.

Thus were the Directors of the Bank of England made happy in the detection of so dangerous an offender, Mr. Charles Price, one of their very worst enemies, and by one of their very best friends, Mr. John Clark, for which service *alone*, exclusive of his numerous others to that great body, a genteel salary, for life, ought to be settled on him, or even-handed justice will make the heavier weight to kick the beam.

The only discovery they had now to make, and which was of the utmost importance, was, where the female companion and implements were concealed. These, also, by a manœuvre of Mr. Clarke's, were discovered, but not till our hero's decease. This we shall relate in turn.

His behaviour, when first in custody, was rather insolent. Mr. Bond, who during Price's residence in King-street, Covent Garden, was
 clerk

clerk at Bow-street, had visited him on account of some money due to Sir John Fielding's maid servant, gained by insuring with Price, which we have before mentioned. He taxed Mr. Bond with prejudice against him on account of that affair, and complained that he should not have justice done him. He laid the same accusation against Abraham Newland, Esq. principal cashier of the Bank, who, he said, would do him every possible injury on account of some former antipathy that gentleman had conceived to him. His reasons for this expression, we are strangers to; but most likely they had never any existence in truth, and were the effects of his predominant malice. Thus conscious of his own guilt, he imputed revenge to every gentleman, who either performed the duty of making him amenable to the laws of his Country, or who stood forward, even officially, to further the calls of Justice.

This meeting, however, was to our hero something similar to that so poetically described by Gay; for altering the noun substantives, he might really sing,

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*The charge is prepar'd, the Directors are met,
The Justices rang'd — a terrible show!*

The questions which were asked him, at this meeting, were indeed very few. He told the Magistrates it was needless to run through his history, they knew well enough who he was, and he should make his defence at another place, if there was a necessity for it; but as he was an innocent man, he was certain he should not be under any such necessity.

The examination being over, if such it could be called, he was put into a hackney coach, accompanied by Mr. Charles Jealous, the before-mentioned Mr. Thomas Ting, and the following petit billet:

Westminster } *To the Governor of Tothilfields*
to wit. } *Bridewell, or his Deputy.*

RECEIVE into your custody the body of
CHARLES PRICE, herewith sent you, brought
before me, *Sir Sampson Wright, Knight*, one of HIS
MAJESTY's Justices of the peace in and for
D d the

the said City and Liberty, by THOMAS TING, and charged before *me* the said Justice, upon the oaths of BENJAMIN TIFFIN, ABRAHAM NEWLAND, ESQUIRE, and others, upon suspicion of having been guilty of divers FORGERIES, against the statute &c.

SAMPSON *Him* therefore safely keep in your
WRIGHT. said custody for further examination,
 until *he* shall be discharged by due
 course of Law, and for so doing
 this shall be your sufficient war-
 rant. Given under my hand and
 seal this 14th day of January, 1786.

One thing we must not omit to mention; when he was under examination, Sir Sampson Wright, suddenly called out Sam, who was purposely placed behind Mr. Price: Sam answered, and appeared before his old master, who started as at a ghost; but recollecting himself, he assumed his old *congee*, and made a polite bow to his old servant, no doubt either to awaken his humanity, or hint at what he might expect if he disclaimed him. The fact was, Samuel could only swear
to

to his voice, but had not the least idea of his person or features.

Being now in durance, and in imagined safety from all further harm, he turned his thoughts, naturally enough, to the destruction of the implements. Well knowing that nothing could be got out of Mrs. Price, or any of his family, to affect him, he had made no scruple of declaring, when under examination, that his lodgings were at Mr. Bailey's, a pastry cook, in Portland-street, Oxford-street; and he was equally secure that nothing could be found there, to afford the least suspicion of his being the forger described under the character of Patch. Determined, therefore, to destroy every thing that could lend the least assistance to that discovery, he sent for Mrs. Price and his eldest son, a fine youth about fifteen years of age, and then to her great surprize, he communicated to her those lodgings, and the circumstances respecting her aunt.

By the son he sent a letter to Mrs. Poulteney, informing her of his situation, desiring her instantly to destroy every atom of the appa-

ratus, clothes, &c. To get this letter safe out of prison, he had recourse to an expedient as artful as it was successful. He told his son, that it was often the custom of the keepers of prisons to search the persons of visitors to prisoners; and as he was charged with an offence, to detect which he had every expedient to dread, his own safety required him to have recourse to equal stratagems to frustrate their designs. Accordingly, having wrote the letter, he desired his son to take off his shoe, which being done, Mr. Price tore up the inner sole, and under it put the letter to Mrs. Poulteney, with this injunction, that if he should be asked any questions at the gate of the prison, whether he had any thing from his father to carry any where, to say no: if they attempted to search him, to submit to the search quietly, and with temper.

This contrivance, and these directions, seem to have been the result of a knowledge of the practice of prisons, and to defeat which, no Newgate bird could have schemed better. We do not indeed know, nor have we heard, that he was ever before confined on a charge of Felony. He had often been in custody for debt, but in
sons

such prisons, such secret conveyances are unnecessary. He could not derive his knowledge, therefore, from any other source than suspicions founded upon hearsay, and what his own good sense dictated to him.

Thus prudent, and thus guarded, in his conveyance of a letter to the very person whom the Bank of England would have given any sum to discover, the manœuvre had it's effect, and the letter reached the aunt in safety. The reason why the gentlemen of the Bank were solicitous to discover the abode of this woman is evident. They knew that wherever she was, the dangerous engines were; that to get at her, would have been getting into possession of all that was so destructive to the community, and therefore the destruction of them was now, naturally enough, the next object of their hearts.

We must here, for a while, leave Mr. Price in his confinement, and accompany the letter to Mrs. Poultney. This shrewd woman, on the receipt of the letter, with an admirable presence of mind, came down into the kitchen where the maid was, and mildly blamed her for

keeping so small a fire in such cold weather. She ordered her to take the cheeks out of the grate, and throw on fresh coals; which being done, and the fire beginning to be somewhat high, she artfully told the maid she had received a letter from her master, who was gone abroad, informing her that the cloaths he had lately worn were infected by the plague, contracted during the time of his being last out of England; and that he had ordered her to burn the whole of them immediately, for fear of the infection spreading, and endangering the lives of all in the house.

She accordingly brought down every article of them in which Mr. Price had concealed himself under the chaacter of Patch, &c. &c. and laying them on the kitchen floor, took a cullender and sprinkled them with water till they were sufficiently damp to prevent their blazing. When this was done, she put them on the fire, and as soon as they began to blaze, took them off, turned and watered them afresh, laying the unburnt part downwards: This she continued till the whole were consolidated into a cake, and by that means reduced every atom to a powder. Thus with a presence of mind,
and

and a dexterity unparalleled in such an extremity, let what would come to pass, whatever could affect him as Mr. Price, nothing could then discover him, by dress, in his character of old Patch.

Having thus effected one principal end of the letter, she then turned her thoughts to the other—the destruction of the materials with which our hero had so industriously carried on his ingenious practices. The servant had a sister living in the neighbourhood, and Mr. Price having had occasion once or twice for a carpenter, one had been employed by Mrs. Poultney, through the medium of this sister, but to whom Price had never been visible. She therefore ordered the servant to go for that carpenter, in order to take down the wood-frame, presses, instruments, &c. with which Price had made his paper, and printed off his notes from the plates, all which were exactly fitted up in the mode and manner of copper-plate printers.

As the description of these implements might be attended with the most lamentable effects, the *curious* reader, we hope, will pardon the omission

omission ; our design is to caution the able and the indigent, and not to make the path of destruction easy and familiar.

To return. While the maid was out for the carpenter, Mrs. Poultney took the copper-plates, &c. put them into the fire, and when thoroughly burnt through, and red hot, took them out, and let them lay till they were cool, whereby they were reduced to a pliability capable of being twisted and broken with ease. Having effected this, she reduced them to very small pieces, and with a large bundle of small wires, with which our hero had manufactured the paper and water marks, gave them to the son, desiring him to take them to the dust heaps behind the houses, in the adjacent fields, and there distribute them from heap to heap, kicking the dust over the pieces as he distributed them, in order to prevent them from being seen by those, whose occupation daily led them to the dust heaps ; and also, if seen, they might not be found in such parcels, as to occasion a surprise, or future enquiry.

The

The lad having obeyed his *great* aunt in these particulars, the remains of these plates lay there, till, by a stratagem of Mr. Clarke's, they were found and brought to Bow-street by dust-men, who could have no idea of their use, who were rewarded as promised by Mr. Clarke. The carpenter having taken down the apparatus, and being paid for his trouble, was dispatched; every thing then was brought down, and reduced to ashes, so that hardly any thing remained a body, but the bits of plates and wires, which could not be reduced, and some large iron implements which nothing in her power could destroy.

A circumstance rather droll in its nature, attended the finding these wires, &c.—It was dark when the dust-men sought for them, and the patrol seeing them lurking about, took them into custody, on suspicion of being there on some bad design—They were brought to Bow-street where an explanation took place, and the poor fellows were as much rejoiced at their delivery, as at the reward then given them.

Let us now take leave of the lady and return to our hero.

The

The night on which he was committed, he was sitting drinking a glass of wine with Mr. Fenwick, when he pulled out of his fob pocket, a ten pound note, and kept ridiculing the officer who neglected to look for it, as a piece of forgetfulness; but when he departed for bed, he left the note wrapped round the stopper of a decanter, over which he had rolled it, and in which it stood all night, where it was, after great search, found the next morning. Whether this was the effect of his confusion, or whether he endeavoured to shew the greatness of his soul by his apparent disregard of such a trifle, we do not pretend to determine. Before he was ordered up for a second examination, he wrote the directions which we have had engraved, in order to shew the dissimilarity of hands, and gave them to Mr. Fenwick, that they might be sent where he desired, vide p. 245.

On the Wednesday following he was ordered up to Bow-street for re-examination, in the way to which he renewed, to Mr. C. Jealous, the subject of the charge against him, laughed at the supposition, and jocularly declared, "I wish, from my heart the OLDHYPOCRITE was taken." To make any comment on the expression is need-

needless ; the severest satyrist existing, or that ever will exist, can never give him a more proper appellation than our hero bestowed upon himself. The SOCIAL MONSTER falls far behind in conveying an idea of his great qualities.

At this examination, which was intended only to let two or three of his agents have a peep at him, the very danger which he courted proved his destruction, for one of the waiters swore positively to him ; and being asked by Mr. Price, with no little assurance, how he knew him, the waiter replied, " I will swear to your *eyes, nose, mouth, and chin.*" From this moment his effrontery retired, to give place to all the horrors of self-murder.

The next day, the boy, whom he had employed to take the money to the Bank, paid him a visit in Bridewell, accompanied by his mother. The boy could not identify him, but the mother, who had seen him with her son about the 'Change, declared Price to be the man that had sent him to the Bank ; that she knew his *mouth and chin* ; and that her child should not be hanged for him. He called the boy an honest good
lad,

lad, but the mother, he declared to have been a very wicked woman indeed !

He had certainly employed his attorney, who previous to the third intended examination, claimed in writing, formal *Oyer* ; but the formality was fruitless by the great action of our hero, who, when he understood, and he had been very solicitous to know the time when he was to be brought up to Bow-street, which was fixed for Wednesday the 25th of April, about twelve o'clock on the preceding evening, which was the 24th, he paid a visit to those shades, where thousands were there assembled to hail the happy hour which sent so great a genius to their society. Thus the Bank of England were saved a great deal of more trouble and expence, by his hanging himself up with a cord against the post of the parlour door, thereby finishing an existence, which was now become as great a burthen to himself, as it had been pernicious to all who knew him.

The news having been immediately reported to the Magistrates, the consideration, now only,
was,

was, how to get at the implements, and the lady who had been our hero's *constant familiar*.

To effect this, Mr. Clarke took the following step. He went to Mrs. Price, told her what had happened, and said, that to prevent her husband being buried in a cross road, and to give the indulgence of a christian funeral, the only thing was, to discover Mrs. Poulteney. The device had its effect, for Mrs. Price hesitating, the elder son dropped on his knees, and implored his mother to tell where she lived, or permit him to do it.—Tenderness to her deceased brute, and the prayers of her child, prevailed,—she told where the lodging was, and the boy with Mr. Clarke, went in a coach to the Meuse, where he found Mrs. Poulteney, alias Mrs. Taylor.

She was taken into custody, and as a matter of course, conducted to Bow-street, where she ingenuously told the circumstances from beginning to end, which were of a nature sufficient to stagger human belief, and which, we hope, for the honour of human nature, will never be equalled to the end of the world—to be ex-

ceeded, is impossible. The frame, iron-work, &c. with which he made the Bank-notes, with the implements employed in making the paper, the press for printing off the notes, were found at a smith's in the neighbourhood, whither the carpenter, who took them down, had carried them by Mrs. Poultney's direction.

The whole of the mystery discovered, the principal offender dead, all the apparatus found or destroyed, and the Gentlemen of the Bank fully satisfied that no accomplice lurked behind the curtain; not wishing to take the life of a woman away, humanely discharged her. As well-wishers to the community, we hope her escape will teach her not to abuse a lenity, which seems, in our opinion, to have been founded on mistaken humanity, and which is rather confirmed by the following fact. On a second search, the frame with which Price made his paper was found in the house, and she being asked by Mr. Clarke what it was, with an art and composure which proved her a perfect disciple of her tutor's, replied, "It is a instrument I use for mangling.—I hope you won't take that away too."

We

We have now concluded our account of Mr. Price, from his birth ; but as curious readers may wish to be informed of minute particulars relative to our hero, we beg leave to conclude our history with them, and then draw some general observations on the whole.

When he was informed that the boy and his mother had been to the office in Bow-street, he told the keeper he had been *betrayed*. Who betrayed him he did not say, but having sent for the boy, who did not know him, and not for the mother who did, and their going afterwards to the Magistrates, convinced Mr. Price there was not fair play somewhere. The next morning he was found hanging in his flannel under-waistcoat, and without his *shoes*, thereby imitating the example of many other great men, who with the utmost Tyburn heroism, scorned to have their memory insulted by such an indignity.

The invention, the method, and the means he took, were of a piece with his usual caution and deliberation. He informed his son, that the people of the prison came into his room sooner than he wished: that, in his situation, he had something secret to write, which they might

get at by suddenly coming upon him; that he wished to prevent it, and gave his son money to purchase two gimblets and a sixpenny cord, pointing out to him how he would stick the gimblets in from post to post, and tie the cord across the door, which opened inwards, and thereby prevent any person from coming in till he pleased to permit them. The scheme had its effect—he fastened the two gimblets under two hat-screws, twisting the cord round each, and thus he had four securities to prevent his falling.

Under his waistcoat were found three papers. One was a petition to the King, praying protection for his wife, and eight innocent children, all of whom, he said, had never offended. In this petition he stated, that he had written the pamphlet before-mentioned, with a view to prevent a war between the crowns of England and Denmark, and to rescue the character of Queen Matilda from the base aspersions cast on it by the Queen Dowager's party, which, with his INNOCENCE, he hoped, might be some plea for royal benevolence. The second was the following letter to Mr. and Mrs. *Fenwick*, which we present the reader with verbatim.

To

To the Lady and Gentleⁿ of this house I think
it is Mrs. & Mr. Fenwick.

Accept pray my sincere & best thanks for the
many and great Civilitys You have had the Hu-
manity to shew me under this grievous Vex-
ation.

I could no longer support myself under the
Tyranny with which I am Oppressed it has not
only destroy'd & utterly ruin'd my Family but
quite destroyed my Head

May God bless and prosper you both and lit-
tle Miss God send You Health and Happiness
and ever have you in His Holy Keeping

With respect and Gratitude

I am yr.

Much obligd

Obt. Hum Set.

CHAS. PRICE.

Friday night
12 oClock

(Superfcrip'd)

The Gentⁿ. & Lady I believe

Mrs & Mr Fenwick

E e 3

(Indorsed)

(Indorfed)

Mr. Fenwick

After all the Papers are done with I beg you will deliver them to my Wife, it will be an addition to those Favours I have already Received from You

C. PRICE.

The third paper, consisted of meditations from Scripture, selected from the Book of Job and the Psalms. He had, on the preceding Sunday, borrowed Mr. Fenwick's Bible, and had been at prayers five hours with Mrs. Price that afternoon. He had been heard to read very audibly, and Mrs. Price's lamentations were still louder. On the Tuesday she saw him again. It was then they parted, and—for ever, for she never saw him afterwards.—Thus, whilst God's words were in his mouth, self-murder was in his heart, and thus he thought to play the OLD HYPOCRITE with his MAKER.

The MEDITATIONS.

*Job. c. iii. v. 3 and 4. Let the day perish wherein
I was*

I was born, and the night in which it was said, there is a man-child conceived.

Let that day be darknes; let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it.

Verse 11. Because it shut not up the doors of my mother's womb, nor hid sorrow from mine eyes.

13. For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept: then had I been at rest.

26. I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came.

Chap. vi. ver. 11. What is my strength that I should hope? and what is mine end that I should prolong my life?

13. Is not my help in me? and is wisdom quite driven from me?

24. Deliver me from the enemies hands, redeem me from the hand of the mighty.

Psaln vi. ver. 6. I am weary with my groaning! all the night make I my bed to swim.

7. *Mine eye is consumed because of my grief; it waxeth old because of all mine enemies.*

10. *Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return and be ashamed immediately.*

15. *He made a pit and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made.*

16. *His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.*

Psalms xxv. ver. 6. Turn unto me and have mercy on me, for I am desolate and afflicted.

Psalms xxxv. ver. 7. For what cause have they hid from me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul.

The reader may plainly see, that this collection betrays a mind full of pride, malice, and revenge, at once disgracing the man, and unbecoming the Christian, especially in his last moments, and fully confirms the appellation we thought proper to fix to these memoirs. In his
coat

coat pocket was found a new razor, which he had got a *friend* to bring to him, under pretence of his wanting to shave himself. If the halter failed his *neck*, the razor was ready for his *throat*, and thus he *made assurance double sure*.

The following letter he addressed to Mr. W. the gentleman who favoured us with the early part of our great man's history. After having robbed him, in trade, of upwards of 2000l. and abused, in the most scandalous manner, his honest and unsuspecting nature, by devices as low as they were infamous, we shall give it *verbatim et literatim*, without a comment on its modesty, only saying it was delivered as it mentions.

Dr Sr.

Misfortune hath persu'd me to the grave. I have deceas'd in great distress. the Bearers are two of my Eldest Sons. they have got 5 Brothers and One Sister. and there Mother is in a very low Condition.

If the Remembrance of the Former Friendship You have had for me. can be a motive for you Kindly to assist in giving them both. or either
of

of them Employment of any Kind . or in any manner . Affording relief to theyr distressed Mother ., the Almighty God will Bless You . for a more exalted degree of Humane Charity there cannot be.

With great respect

I am

Yr.

Unfore. & much

Jan'y. 23^d. 86

Oblig'd Hum. Set.

CHA^s. PRICE.

Mattw. W—ns Esqr
James Street
Westminster

The Boys are both of them very modest Obedient & orderly & exceedingly meek and quiet.

By the date of this letter it appears to have been wrote on the Monday, which was the day before he so heroically dispatched himself.

His

His principles he carried with him to the grave, for the day before his death he declared to Mr. Fenwick, that it was no sin to rob the Bank of England, because it was robbing nobody. Their annual gain, he said, by losses, fire, and sea, by the sudden deaths of people whose relations never knew where the property was, and of others on account of dying intestate, with numberless other reasons, were so great, that it was doing no injury to any one to rob them. This sentiment proved him, in his last hours, a MONSTER as *incorrigible* as SOCIAL.

At the same time we must add, that he told every process of the formation of a Bank note, and the internal management of the Bank, with an accuracy that too well proved his guilt; and commented upon his own conduct in a manner that justified the force of his declaration, which we inserted in page 43 of these memoirs, viz.

Had it not been for my impetuosity of temper, I might now have been worth an hundred thousand pounds.

It is impossible not to observe, that although we have traced little less than an 100,000*l.* in his

his possession, near 10,000l of which he made in the last five years of his life, yet he professed to die *poor*.—That, and that only is a secret to us.—There is one person now living in the world, that perhaps can tell, if he did die poor, what became of all the cash. If he did not die poor, that person must know how it was disposed of.—We must here do justice to a much injured and a much to be pitied wife, Mrs. Price—As she was innocent of a participation of his crimes, she is ignorant of how the ill-gotten wealth was bestowed.

Let the stricken deer go weep.

Be the fact, however, as it may, it is a striking demonstration, that where the Almighty permits, for unknown reasons, so much wickedness to exist, the wretch is at the same time deprived of the power of enjoying it, with ease, safety, and happiness.

His behaviour during the time of his imprisonment was of the same cast which he always assumed whenever he had the good opinion of any person to gain.—It was insinuating and art-

ful

tul to the highest degree of hypocrisy, and corresponded with his wonted observation, "That mankind consisted of tygers, wolves, and foxes, but no lambs," his own behaviour, however, proving, "That there are wolves in lambs cloathing."

It was his constant boast, that he never was drunk but once in his life, and then it was his ruin. — We have no doubt but he alluded to the time of his clerkship at Weovil in Hampshire, as already mentioned. But though he was free from this vice, as well as that of dissipated lewdness, yet his life, consisting of fifty-five years, was a scene of constant and accumulated villanies.

He had a knowledge of almost every trade existing, for if any one was mentioned to him, which he did not understand, he was indefatigable till he was master of it; and it is well worthy observation, that during his last six years his plan was changed with the year. 'Tis true, no other Forger ever flourished six months, though our hero reigned six years; yet he was secured at last by the most idle and simple neglect that

even the greatest idiot would have been guarded against.

Amongst other transactions which crowd themselves on us, we cannot but think that Mrs. Hickeringill is, in some measure, to be pitied—When we consider that this eminent betrayer got her into his clutches in her infancy, and that it is most likely, that he drew her in, step by step, till she found herself so deeply involved, that she could not retreat, her case may plead some degree of compassion. 'Tis plain, however, she had imbibed some of his sentiments, for, on Mr. Mac Manus's, an officer of Bow street, going to her house, the day after she was discharged, for some part of the apparatus left behind, she exclaimed,

God forgive those who fall into the hands of the Bank!

How far she was then struck with contrition, let the fact speak for itself without a comment.

We cannot, however, let the reader go unacquainted with one little ludicrous circumstance—When an old woman, who is the servant of Mr. Fenwick,

Fenwick, went into his room, which was about seven in the morning, he was standing, as she thought, against the door, for his toes actually touched the ground; she said, *How do you do, Sir?* but receiving no answer, and the wind of the door swinging our hero round, she started, not in the attitude, but in a much louder strain, than ever a country Hamlet did, when accosted by his father's ghost.

It has been said in the public papers, that he had employed his Solicitor, appointed his Counsel, arranged his affairs with prudence and wisdom for making his defence, and that opinions had been given on his case sufficiently favourable to induce him to stand trial: Not a word of this is true, except the circumstance of having engaged an Attorney. If there is any meaning in the supposed favourable opinions, it is this: that changing the Teller's ticket at the Bank from a small to a larger sum, payable by a Cashier, was a Fraud and not a Forgery. Such an answer, to such a case, might have been given by those persons of the profession who are lawyers among fools, and fools among lawyers; but we dare assert, that Mr. Price would not

F f 2

have

have applied to any such shallow geniuses. He would have stated his case to men eminent in the profession, and conversant in the crown law. From them, he must have been told, that as long as the words WARRANT, or ORDER, *for payment of money*, remain in the statutes, for the prevention of forgeries, they would have told him, that altering, or publishing a Teller's ticket, knowing it to be altered, with an intention to defraud, is a *specific* forgery.

But it is evident from the event, that Mr. Price placed no confidence in the shallow objection—he was conscious it would not avail him; that if his identity was proved, he was undone, and his sole reliance was on the concealment of his person. On this he so much relied, that he braved his fate, and courted the encounter, by sending for the people whom he had employed as *Patch*, to view him as *Price*; so well was he assured that they could never recognize him as the former, in the character of the latter.

We are certain that this opinion prevailed on him to send for them, because his natural assurance was exhibited in the following measure he had

had previously taken to try if he was even suspected. He would go to the coffee-houses about Change, appear as Price, enquire for Mr. Norton, write a letter, and leave it at the bar. In ten minutes he would come in again as Mr. Norton, take his own letter, drink his coffee and away.

On the day after his executing himself, the Coroner's inquest sat on his body, and having examined his conduct previous to it, and the papers he left behind him, they readily brought in their verdict *felo de se* ; in consequence of which he was buried on the Saturday evening at night, in the cross road near the prison, amidst a numerous croud of spectators. On the subsequent Saturday the grave was, early in the morning, found dug up, and the shell, which the parish provided, laying on the ground.—We have been informed, and have some reason to believe it true, that the unhappy widow paid that pious regard to his remains, which his conduct towards her, when living, never merited ; and that he at last was laid in consecrated ground.—How far he deserved even this respect, these memoirs have pretty plainly demonstrated.

In justice to an individual, we ought not to omit mentioning, that as several news-papers have propagated a report that Mr. Price had borrowed of Mr. Aldus a large service of plate, and left bank-notes as security for his returning it, we assure the reader that it was wholly false and groundless. Mr. Aldus took every step in his power to discover the impostor. He had pledged things of value several times there in the name of Powel—Mrs. Poultney had been there on the same errand, as Mrs. Powel—had represented him as her husband, and as having an important post at St. James's. They had talked of each other as man and wife, and each of them had pledged the same gold watch at different times. But on his apprehension he denied any knowledge of her, even to Mr. Aldus's face.—We mention these circumstances to shew how weak and inefficacious is all the art and subtilty of man, when guilt, even of the longest standing, is suddenly attacked ; for this circumstance, if he had taken his trial, would have been one of the leading features of the conviction.

Before we conclude our account of this great
man,

man, we beg leave to make an observation on his exit.

Conscious of his own guilt, facts hourly rising upon facts, and a public ignominious death staring him full in the face, he sunk under the weight of his own fears. Without fortitude to support him in the hour of trial, he determined to avoid the fate of a public execution, by an act of private desperation.—Had his courage been equal to his ingenuity, he would have met his fate with a modest and resolute manliness; but he rather chose to convince the world that his cowardice was as great as his cunning: from which one inference may safely be drawn, that Mr. Price is a tremendous instance, that though art and address may triumph for a period, yet when public justice overtakes public offenders, human ability is the most deceitful and insufficient prop that ever ingenious guilt can rest upon. We venture to moralize thus far upon the shocking catastrophe, because of all his accumulated crimes, SELF-MURDER, as it was his last, so it was his worst.

Not that our hero was awed by any such idea.

—As

—As he had despised the Author of his life whilst living, so he contemned him in the hour of death, and heroically met his destiny with all the magnitude of mind expressed in Virgil:

—*Fidens animi, atque in utrumque paratus
Seu versare Dolos, seu certæ occumbere Morti!*

F I N I S.



P O S T C R I P T.

Since the conclusion of these Memoirs, we have been informed, that the maltster, whom our great man ruined at Wandsworth, and who had the satisfaction of seeing the coroner's verdict performed, (*vide* page 133) was Mr. Wood, and the gentleman whom he intended to defraud of diamonds, was Mr. Levy of Lincoln's Inn Fields, *vide* page 282.

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